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TIP TOP WEEKLY

AN
IDEAL PUBLICATION
FOR THE AMERICAN YOUTH

Issued Weekly. By subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second-class Matter at the N. Y. Post Office, by STREET & SMITH, 79-89 Seventh Ave., N. Y.

No. 512

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 3, 1906.

Price Five Cents

FRANK MERRIWELL'S NEW IDEA OR THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT



BY
BURT L. STANDISH

"Stop that, Courtney!" cried Merry, as he seized the Englishman's shoulder. "It's your business to teach wrestling; you can't punish any boy in this school with *jiu-jitsu* tricks."



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OR,

The American School of Athletic Development.

By BURT L. STANDISH.

CHAPTER I.

"WELCOME HOME!"

The old year departed with tears of regret, and the new year came in with a bluster of fury, raging amid storms which buried the world under huge drifts of white. January was a bitter month, with the exception of a few days when the usual thaw threatened to come, but, seeming to change its mind, passed on. February was a snowy month, but at last old winter appeared exhausted with his own rage, and the sun shone forth smilingly on the white world. A week of fine weather followed, during which roads were cleared, the snow settled and winter appeared at its best.

Toward the end of this beautiful week the train brought Frank Merriwell and his wife to Bloomfield.

The usual crowd of village loungers was at the station to watch the train arrive and depart. Perhaps

it is not strictly correct to say the usual crowd, for the station loafers had been swelled by a number of curious citizens, who had learned or suspected that something out of the ordinary was about to take place.

Half-an-hour before train time a splendid span of horses, drawing a closed conveyance, on the outer seat of which sat a grave, ebony-faced young darky, drew up beside the platform. Such a turnout was enough to excite the wonderment of the villagers.

"Gol-dinged if that ain't the slickest rig I ever seen!" observed an old chap, as he ran his fingers through his grizzled whiskers and stared at the horses and closed vehicle. "Look at her shine! Why, she's varnished up like a pianner! Look at them glass doors! There's style for ye! Gee whiz! I bet she cost as much as a hundred dollars!"

"A hundred dollars, Uncle Eb!" grunted another

man, as he shifted his chew of tobacco. "Why, your judgment ain't worth shucks! A hundred dollars! I'll bet she cost three hundred, if she cost a cent, and I wouldn't be a blamed bit surprised if she cost five hundred."

"Five hundred!" exclaimed Uncle Eb, scratching vigorously in his whiskers. "Thunderation, that's a heap of money! I never seen five hundred dollars all to once in my life. Look at them hosses! Ain't they clippers, Jim?"

"They ought to be," returned Jim. "I hearn tell as how the pair of 'em cost over two thousand. That team, jest as it stands, represents something like twenty-five hundred dollars. What do you think of that, Eb?"

"By gum! I don't see where folks git so much money," said Eb, shaking his head. "'Specially I don't see where that Merriwell boy ever gut it. Everybody round here knows he lost all the fortune left him by his Uncle Asher. Jest spent it like water, a-speculatin' in stocks. It was keerless—awful keerless. It was wasteful."

"He didn't lose it, Eb. 'Twas his guardien that done that. Yes, old Asher's fortune suttinly was squandered to the last penny, and Frank Merriwell didn't have a cent left. He had to start out for hisself, and worked jest like any common laborer. He done it, all right, and somehow he's made another fortune. I tell ye some folks are born lucky."

"Yeou bet yer!" cried Eb, finding a fresh place to scratch in his whiskers. "Now look at the things he's been havin' done to the old place. Had it all fixed over. 'Sides that, looker them buildings they've put up on the Farnham place, which this here Merriwell boy bought. Everybody in this town is wondering what he's going to do. Is he going to start a 'cademy or a college or something like that? That's the question."

"Well, I guess we'll find out pretty soon, for here comes the train, and I s'pose he's comin' on it."

When the train stopped, the crowd stood agape until a tall, manly young fellow appeared, followed by a handsome young woman, whom he assisted to the station platform.

"That's him! that's him!" muttered the crowd. "That's his wife! She looks like a regular queen."

Frank glanced around at the throng and smiled a bit. Then he nodded in a friendly fashion to several of them.

"Hello, Mr. Given! Howdy do, Mr. Jones! Ah!

there's uncle Eb! Howdy, Uncle Eb! Howdy, everybody!"

The villagers began to beam. This rich young man, whom everybody called lucky, and half the town had jealously envied, was not a bit "stuck up." He remembered and recognized his old acquaintances. There was nothing proud and haughty about him. He spoke to them in a free-and-easy, friendly fashion.

Not only that, but his wife smiled and bowed. That smile was absolutely radiant, and those who had before fancied her good-looking afterward declared that she was the handsomest young woman in the world.

But now something happened that made them all stare harder than ever. A shivering, poorly dressed, unovercoated little chap, the son of one of the poorest men in town, managed to squeeze through the crowd and step before Frank.

"Hello, Mr. Merriwell!" he piped. "Say, I'm awful glad to see you back home ag'in! I s'pose you've forgot me, but I ain't never forgot you."

"Hello, Tommy!" cried Merry, as he seized the boy's hand and shook it warmly. "Forgotten Tommy Ryan? Well, I should say not! The last time I saw you you were a little shaver. Bill Benson's bulldog had you treed."

Tommy Ryan glowed all over. He straightened up like a peacock and threw out his chest.

"That's right!" he cried. "He had me treed, and I couldn't git down. Jingoes! I'll never forgit how you fixed that dog! You jest handled him as easy as if he'd been a kitten, and he went off with his tail between his legs. I've never had a real good chance since then to thank you for that, Frank—er—er—er—I mean Mr. Merriwell."

"Never mind the mister, Tommy. To you and to all my old friends I'm still Frank. Come and see me. I hope none of my friends in town will fail to call on Mrs. Merriwell and myself."

"By jingoes!" muttered an astonished man in the background. "What do you think of that? He ain't a bit stuck up."

The arrival of Merriwell had found that crowd in a cynical, critical, questioning mood, but Merry had seemed absolutely to radiate good nature, with the result that every one present began to beam and feel jovial and friendly toward him. They had expected to see a haughty, distant young man, inflated with self-importance over his success in the world. They had fancied he would hold himself aloof as a superior being, favored of the gods and constructed of something more than common clay. On the contrary, they found him

very human, decidedly unstilted, and so get-at-able that he grasped the hand of a ragged urchin and shook it like the hand of a comrade.

Merry escorted Inza across the platform toward the splendid turnout, beside the open glass door of which stood a darky in livery, trying hard to keep his face grave and dignified.

"Hello, Toots, my boy!" called Merry.

The darky's dignity vanished immediately. He found it impossible to maintain his grave demeanor another moment. Two rows of ivory-white teeth gleamed in a twinkling.

"Yah! yah! yah!" he chuckled. "Why, Massa Frank, it sho am a sight fo' so' eyes to see you, sah. By golly! you'll have to excuse me, but Ah jest can't help laughin', sah. Ah feel such a gladness that it sho am ticklin' me clean down to the ends of mah toes. Yes, sah. An' Miss Inza, mah goodness gracious, ain't she lookin' fine! 'Scuse me! Ah clean fo'got that she am Missus Merriwell now. Gracious sakes alive! Ah s'pose Ah'm sholy disgracin' yo', but I jest gut to laugh. Yah! yah! yah!"

"I'm very glad to see you, Toots," said Inza, feeling herself glow with happiness. "It reminds me of old times—the dear old times!"

"Yas, Missus Inza, it sholy do," said Toots, suddenly growing very sober once more, and a shade of pathos coming to his face. "Dem were de finest times ob mah life. Ah nebber think ob dem dat Ah don't jest want to laugh and cry at de same time. 'Scuse me! Ah 'spect Ah'm talkin' too much. Jest step right into de caboose, and these fancy steppers ob Massa Frank will whisk you right away to yo' home."

"Home!" murmured Inza, a beautiful radiance on her face. "Home! Oh, how good that sounds! Home at last, Frank!"

"Home at last, sweetheart!" he softly said, as he handed her to her seat and found a place beside her.

Toots closed the door and sprang up to the driver's seat.

"Welcome home!" cried a man in the crowd on the platform. And then, "Welcome home! welcome home!" shouted a dozen voices.

Toots cracked his whip, and away went the spirited horses, with a fine tinkle and clang of bells, which rang over the snow like fairy music from the Happy Land of Home.

CHAPTER II.

FRANK'S GREAT PROJECT.

On the top of a slight hill beyond the village Toots pulled up the horses and came to a stop.

"Look, Inza," directed Frank, pointing out of the window. "From here we can obtain a view of the old place. You may see the buildings."

Inza uttered an exclamation of surprise and pleasure.

"The old place!" she cried. "Why, Frank, it's quite transformed! Is that the old house?"

"That's the old house, remodeled and reconstructed throughout," answered Merry. "It looks pretty good to me. You know I haven't seen it since it was thoroughly rebuilt. I accepted the plans and gave complete directions for the work."

"But the stables, Frank—why, such splendid stables!"

"Oh, yes, that's my idea. I propose to keep a few blooded horses, you know. An automobile is all right, but, for real pleasure in the country, give me horses."

"It's splendid, Frank!" breathed Inza. "I'm enchanted!"

"Does it look like home, sweetheart?"

"It does, indeed—a home to make the heart of any girl proud. Oh, Frank, I believe this is one of the happiest days of my life!"

"Well, now, while you're about it," laughed Merry, "won't you be kind enough to take a look out of this window on the opposite side? Here are some other buildings for you to see."

Some distance farther away, standing well back in the midst of a thin grove, were several fine, large buildings, which looked like an academy and accompanying dormitories.

Inza rubbed her eyes in astonishment.

"Why, I don't remember them," she said.

"Don't you?" laughed Frank.

"No, indeed."

"No wonder you don't. You never saw them before. Those buildings stand on the old Farnham place, which I bought when we were here last."

"Well, what are they? They look like school buildings."

"They are school buildings—the most unique school in America. I have named it the American School of Athletic Development."

"You have named it?" gasped Inza. "Why, you don't mean that you——"

"I'm the projector, founder, and man behind it all. My money, taken from my share of the fortune belonging to Dick and myself, paid for the construction

of these buildings. I think the location is ideal. The land is fairly high, and all the country hereabout is healthy. The spot is a beautiful one. You can see the academy, the principal dormitory, the gymnasium, and yonder by the placid lake is the boat-house. To the south stretch the old Farnham acres, and there, in the spring, my workmen will lay out the athletic field and the track."

"I can't quite grasp it all," confessed Inza. "I'm bewildered, Frank. What is the project which you call the American School of Athletic Development?"

"It's my pet scheme, sweetheart, which has been gradually growing in my mind for several years. In this country there are numberless free high schools for the education of the mind, for the mental upbuilding of youth, but I know not of one school for the education and upbuilding of the American boy's body. You know it is my belief, my unalterable conviction, that a weak and puny body is a terrible handicap for a well-trained mind. In recent years there has been a pronounced awakening to the possibility of physical culture. It was not so long ago that very little was known about scientific and methodical physical culture. It was not so long ago that parents believed they had done their full duty to their children when they sent those children to schools of mental training and gave them the best education their means permitted. To-day, even, there are thousands of ill-ventilated, unhealthy school buildings, where the boys and girls study in a foul atmosphere, sitting on improperly constructed benches, rounded over improperly built desks, and slowly but surely ruining their health while they acquire a mental equipment for the battle of life. This is one of the great errors of our modern school system. The time will come—it's coming swiftly now—when these mistakes will be rectified. More attention is being paid to the proper ventilation of school buildings nowadays. Gymnastic and physical-culture exercises are being introduced into schools everywhere. Still lots of schools are far behind the times in this matter, and hosts of teachers are incompetent in the matter of the proper education of the bodies of their scholars. It always gives me a feeling of sadness, not unmixed with anger, to see a bright boy with undeveloped limbs, hollow chest, and rounded shoulders. No matter if this boy is a mental prodigy and his parents are proud of his accomplishments, it ever seems to me that a crime has been committed in permitting him to grow up a weakling. Without a strong body, without health, the most brilliant man in the

world is incapable of attaining the heights to which he should rise.

"I beg your pardon, Inza. I quite forgot that I've talked this same thing to you before. Whenever I speak of it I grow enthusiastic, and I fancy I become tiresome."

"Not to me, Frank," protested his wife. "You know I agree with you heart and soul. I suppose you have some scheme in connection with your school by which you hope to aid, to some extent, in correcting this evil."

"That's right. At West Point there's a government school for the training of boys to become soldiers. At Annapolis there's a government school for the training of boys to become men-of-war. But nowhere in America is there an open school for the training of boys to become strong, manly men, good, vigorous citizens, supplied with the necessary strength, and energy, and health to fight the one battle that is being constantly waged, the battle of life. This is my idea of the American School of Athletic Development. I can't give you all the finer details and plans for the school, but it is proposed that a certain number of boys from each State in the Union shall be admitted. These boys are to be recommended by a congressman of their State, or men of influence and prominence, as worthy boys who are in need of the upbuilding physical training which they will receive at this school. Three prominent philanthropic men have agreed to act as the examining board to pass on these applicants. If a boy is deserving and poor, it makes no difference—he'll be taken into this school just the same, and given the very best attention possible to correct his physical defects and make him strong and healthy. I am to be at the head of the school. I shall have a first-class corps of assistants, a man for each department, who knows his business thoroughly."

"In order to open this school as soon as possible, I have found it necessary to seek assistance in employing this corps of physical instructors. My examining board kindly consented to aid me, and several of my teachers are already employed. The school has been advertised, and I've received notification that already there are something like thirty applications from deserving boys. In two weeks the school will open."

"Magnificent, Frank!" cried Inza. "Still, it's such a gigantic project that I tremble."

"Why?"

"I see the possibility of its development into something beyond your means to support and maintain. Even your fortune is not exhaustless."

"That's true," nodded Merry; "but I have faith, and it is my belief that I'll receive support from men of wealth when the real truth about the school becomes generally known. Already one of the big steel kings has shown an interest and is seeking accurate information concerning the school. I've been informed that he thinks it a splendid project and a most deserving one. This man himself has been greatly hampered through ill health. He says he might have done much more in the world than he has been able to accomplish had he been properly trained and physically developed in his boyhood. He's a philanthropist. He has given freely to hospitals. If I can satisfy him that everything is all right here, it's not improbable that he'll aid my school. He's only one. Others will follow, Inza."

She took Frank's hand and pressed it warmly.

"Others will follow, Frank," she echoed. "I have no doubt of it. You're not given to failure. You will not fail in this, the greatest project of your life."

CHAPTER III.

THE SCHOOL OPENS.

The school opened at the time set, with over forty scholars present and as many applications under consideration by the committee.

At nine-thirty on the morning of the opening day the boys assembled in the large, light, well-ventilated main room of the academy.

A strange-looking gathering of chaps they were, ranging from twelve years of age to seventeen. They were large and small, slim and fat, tall and short, bow-legged and hump-backed, flat-chested and round-shouldered, thin-necked and knock-kneed—indeed, with few exceptions, their physical infirmities and imperfections were instantly apparent to any observer. Some were well dressed, or, at least, decently attired, but there were others whose clothes bespoke their poverty. Two or three seemed haughty and inclined to hold aloof from their companions. The most of them betrayed curiosity and interest as Frank Merriwell and three assistant instructors stepped onto the platform and faced them. Merry's companions took seats, while Frank stepped to one side of the plain desk at the front of the platform and surveyed the gathering of boys before him. One enthusiastic chap started to clap his hands, but Merriwell checked him with a gesture and a slight smile.

Then Frank spoke to them in a pleasant, friendly fashion, expressing gratification that so many were present and so many more seemed eager and anxious

to come, although the school was just opened and the public at large knew very little about it. On this occasion Merry had little to say about the aim and object of the school, stating that doubtless every boy before him must be already aware of these things.

In a general way he briefly outlined the course that would be pursued with each boy who entered. Every lad would be critically inspected for physical defects, and for each one a course of gymnastics and general exercises, calculated to improve his condition, would be mapped out. Boys particularly requiring it would be given the needed amount of personal attention, but as soon as expedient the most of them would be graded into classes. This idea of dividing them into classes seemed important to Frank, as the boys of each class would be spurred on by their ambitious mates and thus led to do much better work than they were likely to do individually and alone. He wound up with a vigorous and inspiring talk on the value and importance of physical strength and energy.

As he talked Merry surveyed the faces of the lads before him, studying those boys critically and sizing them up, one after another. Some followed every word he uttered and showed deep interest, while others were inclined to be somewhat heedless, and still others permitted their minds to wander and plainly failed to grasp the gist of this talk.

Suddenly Merry ceased speaking and stood quite still for several minutes, his eyes fixed on the gathering before him. In this manner, without verbally demanding it, he riveted their attention.

"Now look here, boys," he said, "I note that some of you are far more interested in looking over your schoolmates than you are in listening to what I'm saying. You'll have plenty of time to look one another over and become thoroughly acquainted. I'll see to that. While I'm speaking I want your attention, and I expect you'll give it to me."

After that all pretended to listen closely, even though with some his words seemed to pass in at one ear and out at the other.

In conclusion he introduced to them Charles Courtney, an Englishman, who was to be their instructor in wrestling and boxing. Then he presented William Roberts, the swimming instructor. Lastly came Jack Marshall, the instructor in general gymnastics.

"I think," he said, "that at present these instructors will be all I shall need. As the school grows, which I am confident it will, I shall add other teachers to the corps. It will be my privilege and pleasure to act as general overseer and instructor of all classes and all

students. Every morning at ten o'clock there will be a lecture given in this room, to which the attendance of all boys in the school will be required. Absence will be permitted only on account of ill health or some other equally acceptable excuse.

"Now, boys, you've come here to make men of yourselves—good, strong, healthy men, such as the world wants. I expect you will, with energy and enthusiasm, take hold of the work outlined for you. We want no shirkers. What we want is ambition and ginger and determination. Determination! Boys, that's a great word. Determination and perseverance conquer all things. Without determination or perseverance no one ever succeeds in the great battle of life. We're all soldiers, fighting for a place in the world. Some of us may rise. Some of us may become sergeants, lieutenants, captains, generals. The possibility of rising is something that should fill every one of you with a fine sensation and keen anticipation.

"You know the old saying that there's always room at the top. It's just as true now as it ever was. But how can a man mount to the top unless he has the stamina and strength to struggle upward amid the great mass of strugglers he will find clinging to the lower rounds of the ladder?

"At the present time, boys, you possess the finest thing in life. That is youth. All this great battle, all these possibilities, all these fine things to be attained lie ahead of you. You have plenty of time to get there, and some of you *will* get there. If you make mistakes at the start, you can begin over, for the best years of your life will still be ahead of you. With a man of middle age it's different. He can't afford to make mistakes. He can't afford to waste time. Time is precious with him, and a serious setback hurts him far more than it does a young man.

"It's possible that some of you boys will always remain privates in the ranks. At the same time, there's a difference among common soldiers. Some who are properly drilled and prepared for battle are sure to prove the value of their training when any great struggle comes. The poorly trained and poorly prepared soldier loses his nerve in the great clash, gets panicky, and takes flight. If you must be common soldiers, boys, be good ones. I'm going to help you. I'm going to do everything in my power to drill you and fit you for this mighty battle. I want you to regard me as a comrade and friend—one who is with you heart and soul, one whose sympathy you may ever depend on, and one who will stick by you to the end."

At last he had their complete attention, and now

there was no suppressing the sudden burst of genuine and hearty applause.

"This is all I have to say to you this morning," smiled Frank. "To-morrow morning at ten I will talk to you here on 'Fresh Air and Plenty of It.' You may now go to the gymnasium, where my assistants will examine you and make a record of your needs. I think that will take up the most of the forenoon until eleven-thirty. From eleven-thirty until 1 P. M. you will have lots of time to become acquainted."

The boys filed out and hurried to the gymnasium, which was thrown open for the first time.

It was beyond question one of the best-outfitted school gymnasiums in the country, and drew exclamations of surprise and delight from nearly all of those lads.

An hour later Frank entered the gym. He found the three instructors still busy at work making records of the boys. At the same time many of the students were employing themselves in various exercises, having already received their gymnasium suits from the young man who was giving them out.

Merriwell spoke to a tall, thin, flat-chested lad, who was savagely yanking away at the chest-weights, his face covered with perspiration.

"What's your name?" questioned Frank.

"Bemis, sir—Hiram Bemis."

"Well, Hiram, how long have you been pulling at those chest-weights?"

"Oh, fifteen or twenty minutes, I guess."

"I think you'd better stop it. Fifteen or twenty minutes, Hiram! Why, five of that work is enough for you at one time just now. You're overdoing. Don't make the mistake, my boy, of thinking you're going to become a Sandow in a week or two. Don't get the idea into your head that you'll build yourself up by jumping into this work and driving at it with all your might until you're completely exhausted. You're tired now."

"I guess that's right," admitted Bemis; "but Mr. Marshall said I would need work at the weights to build up my back and chest and develop my arms."

"Marshall was right," nodded Frank; "but you must follow the system that will be outlined for you. You can't work at those weights properly of your own accord. It won't do you any good in particular if you go at them haphazard and yank away as you were doing. To-morrow you'll be given a course of exercises that are suitable for you."

He passed on and spoke to another boy, who was standing with his arms hanging at his sides, gazing

dully at nothing in particular and really seeming to be half asleep.

"Hello!" said Frank. "What's your name?"

"Lan-der, sir," drawled the sleepy chap; "Jake Lander."

"Well, Lander, what's the matter with you?"

"I don't know just what the mat-ter is, sir. There ain't no-body told me yet."

"Well, why did you come here to this school?"

"Oh, I ain't nev-er been very strong, sir. I'm the weak-est one in our whole fam-i-ly."

"How many are there in your family?"

"Well, there's paw and maw, of course, and then there's Sam-my, and Am-a-ri-ah, and Chris-to-pher, and Hez-e-ki-ah, and Phi-ne-as, and Tim-o-thy, and—"

"Wait a minute," interrupted Frank. "Who are all these?"

"Why, they're my bro-thers, sir," answered Jake, with a slight indication of surprise.

"Evidently you belong to quite an extensive family," smiled Merry. "Go on."

"Then there's my sis-ters, sir. There's Re-bec-ca, and Me-hit-able, and Je-mi-my, and Chlo-rin-dy, and Em-e-line, and An-gel-i-ca—I guess that's all, sir."

"Well, well!" exclaimed Frank. "And you're the weakest one of the family? What has caused this singular weakness?"

"I dun-no, sir. I jest nev-er did have a great deal of strength to do any-thing at a-all. When I had to lug in a lit-tle wood for maw it al-ways ex-hau-st-ed me so I jest went and laid right dow-un."

"Well, that's too bad. Let me examine you."

Frank hastily felt the sleepy chap over, giving him some pinches and nudges which caused him to grunt a little.

"I think we'll be able to build you up, all right," said Merry, a twinkle in his eyes. "We'll put strength and energy into you. See those chest-weights over there, sir?"

"Y-e-es, sir."

"Well, now suppose you go over and get at them. Just tackle them in earnest and pull away at them for about twenty minutes."

"Good gra-cious! I don't be-lieve I ev-er can do it, sir."

"Go ahead," commanded Frank. "Let's see you try it. Keep at it until I tell you to stop. I'll have an eye on you."

Lander reluctantly approached the chest-weights and tackled them. After about three pulls he stopped to

rest. To his dismay, Frank appeared at his shoulder and told him to keep at it.

"Jake," said Merry, "you haven't been exercising enough, and you've eaten too much. Now, a person who doesn't work has no right to eat. Between you and me, unless you keep at those weights until I tell you to quit, I'm afraid we'll have to cut down your diet. We'll have to put you on plain bread and water."

"Good lan-d!" gurgled Lander, as he developed a surprising burst of strength and energy. "I nev-er could sta-and that, sir! I've jest gut to have my vittles reg'lar, sir, and plen-ty of 'em."

"You'll get all you need of the right kind of food if you do your work, Jake," promised Merry, as he turned away.

Needless to say, although it caused him to perspire and look very weary indeed, Jake Lander stuck to the chest-weights until Frank finally appeared and gave him permission to stop.

Merry spoke to many other boys, seeming to divine their needs and weaknesses at a glance, restraining them or urging them on as they required.

In this manner passed the first forenoon at the school.

CHAPTER IV.

BOB BUBBS.

After eleven-thirty the boys came straggling into a large room adjoining the library and reading-room, where they had been urged to congregate by Frank in order to meet one another and become better acquainted.

Merry was there to receive them, and he did his best to make all feel easy and at home.

At first most of them were inclined to be distant and constrained in their manner. Gradually they "loosened up" and began to gather in groups to chat.

One slender, red-cheeked little chap, by the name of Bob Bubbs, proved to be a valuable assistant to Merry in putting the lads at their ease. Bubbs strolled about with his hands in his pockets and introduced himself generally to every one.

"Hello, fellows!" he cried, as he butted into a group of three, his eyes twinkling. "Tell me about it. What ails you? My trouble is getting chronic. You see I'm too strong. Came here to reduce my strength. Think they'll be able to do it?"

A thin, hollow-cheeked boy, with expressionless eyes, gave Bob Bubbs a stare.

"That's very singular, indeed," observed this fellow. "I never heard of such a thing before."

"Oh, I'm an odd duck," chuckled Bob. "I'm different from every one else. My name is Bubbs—Robert Bubbs, Esq. What's yours?"

"My name is Lawrence Graves," was the answer.

"Glad to know you, Gravy, old chap!" cried the little fellow, as he seized the sober boy's hand and shook it furiously. "Your left shoulder seems to be a little higher than your right. I say, fellows, isn't this the finest outfit you ever saw? Everybody is askew somehow. Now, what's your affliction?"

This question was fired at Walter Shackleton, who frowned unpleasantly and seemed to hesitate about answering.

In the meantime, Bubbs looked Shackleton over and made a discovery. "Terrible! terrible!" he sighed. "Did they send your parents to the penitentiary for it?"

"For what?" growled Shackleton.

"Why, permitting you to preambulate so early. It's evident you began to prowl around on your pins before your little leggins were strong enough to bear you. Either that, or you got them wet sometime and stood too near the stove. They've warped terribly."

"You're inclined to be very personal, Bubbs," said Shackleton. "Somebody won't like it."

"Now, perhaps I've made a mistake," said the little fellow. "It may be you warped those legs riding a high horse. Get off your high horse, old man. Come down with the rest of the bunch. Don't you think he'd better?"

Bob put this question to the third member of the group, a boy whose face shone like a glass bottle and whose oily hair was spatted and smoothed down on his head. Without giving the fellow a chance to answer, Bubbs stood on tiptoe and demanded to know his name.

"Er—eh—oh, my name is Oliver Slick," was the answer.

"Fits you to a T," declared Bubbs. "I might have known it when I looked at you. You certainly are a slick-looking chap, Oily. Now we're all acquainted and friendly. What do you think of this school, anyhow, fellows?"

"I think it's far too early to express an opinion about the school," said Lawrence Graves solemnly. "I don't believe in forming hasty opinions."

"Something's the matter with your voice," said Bob. "You're talking a little thick, old man."

"Yes," nodded Graves, "I have a cold in my head."

"Gee! you're lucky to have something in it," grinned the little chap.

"My friend," said Shackleton, "you're very fresh."

"Never mind, never mind. That's all right. Oh, say, get onto the big fellow who's hanging to the hook yonder. Wonder if he's awake?"

The big fellow proved to be Jake Lander, who was leaning against the wall, with his eyes half closed, wearing an expression of complete exhaustion. Bubbs crept up behind Lander, stooped low, seized him by the calf of the leg with a thumb and forefinger, and suddenly barked like a dog.

Instead of jumping, Lander slowly turned his head and looked round over his shoulder as he drawled:

"Get your teeth fil-ed, Tow-ser."

"Oh, wow, wow!" gasped Bubbs. "Towser? Well, what do you think of that?"

"Towser! Towser!" cried several of the boys laughingly. And thus Bob was given a nickname that was bound to stick.

"Speaking about dogs," said Bob, as he turned back to the group of three, "I had to leave my dog at home. Wanted to bring him with me, but they won't take dogs here. How'd they happen to let you in?"

This question was shot at Shackleton, who frowned still more fiercely.

"Somebody'll punch you if you keep this up," the bow-legged boy declared.

"Not if I see 'em first. But my dog is a fine dog. I call him Tobacco. You see he's a Spitz dog. Oh, my, what a headache! what a headache!"

He danced away toward a rather haughty-appearing lad, who was standing apart from the others, regarding every one with a critical eye.

"Maybe it isn't as bad as that," said Bubbs consolingly. "Seems to me I heard Mr. Merriwell call you Irving. Any relation to Sir Henry, or Washington? Say, Wash was the real hot stuff in literature, wasn't he? Take his story about Rip, for instance—I never can read that story without shedding a bucket of tears. Irving, you've got a girl. That's what's the matter with you. You're pining. Now stop it, my boy—stop it. These modern girls are all full of electricity. You'll get a shock if you ever marry one."

Arthur Irving continued to survey Bubbs with an air of unaltered haughtiness. Finally he coughed hollowly behind his hand, and the little chap noticed that his fingers bore a telltale yellowish stain.

"You'll have to cut 'em out," said Bubbs promptly. "Frank Merriwell won't stand for cigarettes, old man."

"Evidently you know all about his business," said Irving, shrugging his shoulders and turning away.

"So long," called Bob cheerfully. "Next time I

speak to you I'll bring a step-ladder and try to get up somewhere near you."

Then he singled out Hiram Bemis, who was beaming good-naturedly on every one who seemed rather lonely.

"What's your name?" demanded Bob, as he seized Hiram's hand. "I'm Bob Bubbs. Fellers called me Towser a few moments ago. Isn't that enough to knock your bark off?"

"My name is Hiram Bemis," answered the tall fellow. "Folks call me Hi for short."

The little fellow staggered and clapped one hand to his forehead.

"Hi for short?" he gasped. "Say, that's a good one. Hi, you look like a Solomon. Answer me one thing—tell me what makes the water in the watermelon?"

"Hey?" said Hi. "What makes the water in the watermelon?" Why, I never thought of that. What makes it?"

"Why, you see, they plant the seeds in the spring," chuckled Bob.

Instantly Hiram opened his mouth and let out a belch of laughter that caused every one in the room to turn and stare at him.

"At last! at last!" cried the little chap, in great satisfaction. "I've found one fellow who appreciates my sparkling wit."

CHAPTER V.

THE BOY WHO TOLD.

"Who's that little runt dodging around like a mosquito?" asked a boy with a queer round and corpulent body and a spindling pair of legs.

Bubbs heard him and instantly pranced over to him.

"Say, fellers," he demanded, looking around at others in the vicinity, "when does the balloon go up? Isn't it pretty near time?"

"Are you referring to me?" demanded the boy with the corpulent body. "You want to be careful how you talk about me. If you don't, I may do something to you that you won't like."

"Where's the professor?" cried Bubbs. "Stop that leak; the gas is escaping!"

"Perhaps you don't know who I am!" snapped the angry chap. "My name is Bunderson. My father is William Bunderson, of Seymour, Indiana."

"Hoosier father, eh?" said Bob.

"Who's my father?" rasped Bunderson. "I just told you, didn't I?"

"Sure, sure," nodded Bob. "Belongs in Indiana? Hoosier, of course."

"Some people make me sick!" muttered Victor Maynard, as he turned his back on Bubbs and walked away.

Maynard had his eye on Arthur Irving, whom he deferentially approached.

"Say, old man," he whispered, "I'm dying for a smoke. Can't we get out somewhere and have a whiff?"

Irving regarded Maynard doubtfully.

"Do you smoke?" he asked.

"Do I? Ask me! Say, what do you think of this bunch, anyhow?"

"I don't think much of them," answered Irving.

"I don't, either. I've been circulating around them some, but they don't strike me just right. You know some of those fellows are talking about you?"

"Talking about me, are they?"

"Sure."

"Let them talk. I don't care. What are they saying, anyhow?"

"Oh, they think you're stuck up. They don't like your manner."

"Well, I'm glad of it. The less they like me, the better satisfied I'll be. They're a lot of freaks."

"That's what they are, Irving. That's your name, isn't it? Mine's Maynard. How'd you happen to come here?"

"Oh, my mother sent me. She's heard a lot about Frank Merriwell and his anti-tobacco principles. Somebody blabbed to her and told her how much I was smoking. She got onto me all right. Fixed it with the old man. They talked it over, and decided that the best thing to do with me was to send me here awhile, until I could be cured of the cigarette habit. Wasn't that silly? As if smoking cigarettes ever hurt any one!"

As he finished speaking, Irving again placed his stained fingers over his mouth and coughed hollowly.

"How do you think this old school's going to pan out, anyhow?" asked Maynard.

"It's a freak idea, all right," was the answer. "I suppose Merriwell's well enough, but he's got a fine bunch with him. That Englishman, Courtney, the wrestling and boxing instructor, makes me tired. I'd like to soak him once."

"Say, I've found out that a lot of fellows feel that way about him. They've all taken a dislike to him. Do you snow-shoe?"

"No."

"Going to try it this afternoon?"

"Not if I can help it."

"Play baseball?"

"No."

"Football?"

"No."

"Play anything?"

"Poker, sometimes," answered Irving, with a faint smile and another cough.

"Well, you'll have to go in for something, you know," said Maynard. "Merriwell is sure to get you pegging away at something, old man. Excuse me. There's a fellow I want to speak with. See you later, and we'll have a little whiff."

Maynard dodged out into the hall and spoke to a man he had noticed passing the door. That man proved to be Charles Courtney, the wrestling and boxing instructor.

"Beg your pardon, Professor Courtney," said Maynard, glancing around to make sure no one was watching him as he spoke to the Englishman. "I've been getting acquainted with the fellows in there, sir, and I think you ought to know something. They're an awful cheap lot, and they've been talking about you, sir."

"Now you don't really mean it, do you?" questioned the Englishman, with a slight frown. "Talking about me, are they? What are they saying about me?"

"They don't like you, sir. They think you're going to be rough. Some of them say they won't stand any roughness from you."

"Really, don't you know, I think they'll change their minds," said Courtney. "A lot of them need to be handled roughly. They had better be careful how they talk about me. Really they had. I don't like any one to talk about me."

"I don't think it's right, sir, and that's why I spoke to you," said Maynard.

"Very good, my boy—very good. Now you'll listen and hear what they're saying, and when they make any particularly nasty remarks about me, I wish you'd let me know of it."

"I'll do so, sir—I'll do so," promised Maynard.

A few moments later Courtney himself entered the room where the boys had gathered to chat. He walked about among them, regarding them all in a suspicious manner. Some were inclined to make derisive gestures behind his back, but others contented themselves in staring after him disdainfully.

"Hello, Professor Courtney!" said Frank, catching sight of the Englishman. "I've just received word from Doctor Fritz Schnitzle. He will arrive some-

time this afternoon. I think I spoke to you about him. He's the famous German doctor whom I have persuaded to come here as physician for this school. I'm not certain that I'll be here when he arrives. I may be out somewhere with the snow-shoe class. You will be here. I wish you to receive Doctor Schnitzle and look after him."

"Very well, sir, I'll do so," nodded Courtney. "I'll be looking out for him. Would you mind describing him, Mr. Merriwell?"

"Oh, he's a small man, rather stout, sandy, chin-whiskers, broad German accent, and eccentric in his manner. You can't make a mistake. You'll know him the moment you see him."

Bob Bubbs had his ears open to this conversation, and a queer expression came over his face. Seizing Tommy Chuckleson, a new acquaintance, by the elbow, Bob drew him aside and whispered in his ear:

"Say, Chuck, did you get onto that? Doctor Schnitzle will arrive this afternoon. Mr. Merriwell won't be here. The British Lion is to receive Doctor Schnitzle. Chuck, I was reared among the Dutch. I can do a Dutch stunt to perfection. I've got Lou Webber fried to a crisp. I gave an imitation of Webber at our amateur minstrel show at home, and simply knocked the house silly. Thought I might get a chance to wear me make-up at a party or something of that sort, and brought it with me. Chuck, keep mum, but Doctor Fritz Schnitzle is going to arrive early after Frank Merriwell departs to-day."

CHAPTER VI.

DOCTOR SCHNITZLE ARRIVES.

When the boys tried snow-shoeing that afternoon Bob Bubbs proved to be so distressingly awkward at it that he was soon permitted to quit and watch the others.

"I'll give you my personal attention to-morrow, Bubbs," said Frank.

"Oh, thank you, sir!" gurgled the little chap. "You're too kind."

Merry surveyed Bob with a suspicious air. Somehow there seemed something insincere in the boy's manner.

"You're a rascal," thought Frank. "I'll have to look out for you."

In this manner Bubbs was able to slip away to his room while Merriwell made up a class from those who traveled skilfully on snow-shoes. There were nine in this class, and they finally started out from the acad-

emy under the leadership of Frank. The other boys gave them a rousing cheer as they departed.

About ten minutes after the departure of the snow-shoers a most eccentric figure came slipping softly down the main stairs of the dormitory and reached the outer steps ere being observed by any one. It seemed to be a little man, who wore clothes much too large for him. His swallow-tail coat dangled against his heels as he walked. His old-fashioned derby hat was pulled down over his head as far as it would go. About his neck was wound a red scarf, and he had red mittens on his hands. A fringe of sandy hair bulged out from beneath his dicer all the way round his head. His sandy whiskers bristled out over the red scarf like a stiff brush. His face was florid and Teutonic in expression. This little man paused on the steps, a huge valise in one hand and an umbrella in the other, gazing around with a doubtful air.

"Great Jamaica Ginger!" exclaimed Hiram Bemis, catching sight of the peculiar figure. "Who's that feller? Never seen him around here before."

Several of the boys hastened toward the steps, where the little man stood watching them with a pair of twinkling eyes.

"How do you do, sir?" saluted Walter Shackleton. "I hope I see you."

"Vass dere anyting mit your eyes der matteration?" demanded the little man. "Uf course you seen me alretty."

"S-a-y," said Jake Lander, "he talks like a Frenchman, don't he?"

"A Frenchman?" sneered Vic Maynard. "Well, you're a good judge, Weary!"

"Yah," said the little man, "he peen a goot juch. He talks like a mooly cow. Zay, ven dit you escapement from der pasture?"

"Oh, ho! ho!" shouted the boys. "A mooly cow! That's one on you, Jake."

"He's kind-er gol-darn-ed sar-sy, ain't he?" drawled Lander. "S-a-y, mis-ter, you talk like a bab-boon. When did you es-cape from the ca-age?"

"Vat vass dot? vat vass dot?" snapped the man on the steps, as he flourished his umbrella threateningly. "How dit you haf der courageousness such language to use py me? I vass a chentleman uf great extinc-tion."

"My dear sir," purred Oliver Slick, removing his hat and making a polite bow, "I hope you will pardon him. He doesn't know any better."

The little man descended quickly to the lower step,

touched Oliver's oiled hair with his mitten and then held the mitten to his nose.

"Mine cootness!" he gasped. "Vat kint uf oil do you use on my hair? It schmells like oldtmargerene undt britty oldtmargerene."

This caused the boys to laugh at Slick's expense, not a little to his discomfiture.

"Bring me a placard, somebody," called Vic Maynard, "and I'll tag this thing. Supposing we mark it Lost, Strayed, or Stolen?"

"Ach, Gott!" exclaimed the little man, as he straightened up and threw out his stomach. "Dere vass a pright poy! Yah. I shall haf to gif him a leedle uf my distension. Poys, I supposition dis vass der great American School Athletic Development uf. Yah? Nein? Vass I nod correction?"

"That's right," nodded Shackleton. "Now, who are you?"

"Vat?" squawked the stranger, dropping his valise and beginning to thump himself on the chest with the ends of his mittened fingers. "Vat, me? Vass it pozible you don't knew who I vass? Mine gootness! I peen der doctor."

"The doctor?" exclaimed several of the boys, in surprise. "What doctor?"

"Vat doctor?" shouted the stranger, waving his umbrella wildly over his head. "Vy, to be course I vass der doctor vat Frank Merrivell sent for alretty."

The boys looked at one another inquiringly.

"Now what do you think of that?" snickered Simeon Scrogg. "It's the horse-doctor. You know Merriwell keeps horses. He's sent for a horse-doctor, and this is the gentleman."

"Vat? vat!" whooped the man on the lower step, growing more and more excited. "How coot I peen so mistaken py you? I vass der great Cherman scientist on all diseasements der physical anatomy uf. I vass Doctor Fritz Schnitzle, undt Frank Merriwell haf me engaged to supply der doctoring for dis school. Yah."

Vic Maynard staggered, clutched at his heart, and fell on Walter Shackleton's shoulder.

"Oh, say!" he panted. "Boys, this is our doctor! Boys, this is—*this* is going to doctor us!"

Again Doctor Schnitzle threw back his shoulders and beamed upon them.

"Now, poys, you haf discovered me," he chuckled. "I vass der pill dispenser uf dis great school. Yah. Take uf me a goot look, so you vill knew me der next time you meet myself. Ven coot Mr. Merriwell found me?"

"My dear doctor," purred Oliver Slick, "I regret to

inform you that Mr. Merriwell is absent at present. I presume he will return in due time."

"How coot he peen absent ven my word telegraphed to him dot I vould arrife here dis afternoon?" cried Schnitzle. "It vass his duty to remain undt me gif a grand reception. Such lack of distension is a great insult to my indignity. Yah."

"A doctor?" said Vic Maynard. "Well, he certainly butchers the English language all right."

"I resume you vass der scholars at dis school," said the little man, as he surveyed them. "It iss efferdent der treatment uf a doctor iss py you needed. If arount me you vill collection, I vill uf you make an examination undt vill toldt you vat vass der matter py you. Stood avay closer py me, poys. Dot vass right. Distribute yourselves arount dese steps."

The chuckling boys gathered about the steps, wondering what was coming next. Doctor Schnitzle singled out Hiram Bemis, seized him by one ear, and gazed intently into his eyes. Then he removed Hiram's hat and felt of his head.

"My poor poys," he said dolefully, "you haf corns on your prain. Eet vass a great affliction. For you I shall describe a regular diet. Der morning in you vill eat oatmeal undt sawdust mit sour milk. For lunch you vill haf some goot tar soup. At dinner you vill eat nuttin' at all. Dese t'ree meals you vill take mit regulation. Yah. Uf good luck you haf, your troubles vill recover from you in about eleven years."

"Great Jamaica Ginger!" gasped Hi.

"Next!" went on the doctor, as he seized Victor Maynard. "Your case vill take me up. I observation dot you haf gumboils on your heels. To dese gumboils you should supply each night a blaster of cod liffer oil. It vill dood you goot uf it helps you. Next!"

He pushed Victor away and seized Oliver Slick.

"Py chimminy!" he cried. "Uf dis don't peen der most wonderful peculiar case you effer saw! Yah. Dis poys prain haf had a displazement. It vass missing. Sometime when he vass vary, vary young he accidentally lost his prain."

"Say, old flubdub," cried Oily, flushing with anger, "perhaps you think you're funny! This kind of business don't go here. You're no doctor; you're a lunatic!"

"So vass I, my boy. Don't get excited."

"Hi, hi, fellows!" called Simeon Scrogg. "Look out, here comes old Courtney!"

Professor Courtney was advancing rapidly toward the group about the steps. There was a frown on his face, and his air was one of deep displeasure.

"What are you boys doing here? There are other things about which you can occupy yourselves, don't you know," he said. "Who is this?"

"Py chimminy!" grinned Doctor Schnitzle, as he surveyed Courtney. "Undt here's a case vat needs my immediate distention. You vill oxcuse me, sir, uf I look you ofer mitout delay."

To Courtney's surprise, the little man sprang down the steps, grasped his left foot, turned up his trousers leg, and felt of his ankle.

"What are you doing?" demanded Courtney.

"Hush!" hissed Schnitzle. "Your pulse vass taking me! Mine cootness chracious, it peen awful! You vass completely upset. All your life you haf been walking around der wrong end up. Hereafter you must walk on your hands uf you vish to rectify your system."

"Certainly you're insane, man!" snarled Courtney. "What are you doing around here? Who are you?"

"Me? Who I vass?" squawked the little man, again vigorously thumping himself on the chest. "Yott should recognition me at vonce. I vass der great Cherman specialist of all diseases, Doctor Fritz Schnitzle."

Courtney staggered.

"Doctor Schnitzle?" he gasped, with an expression of horror on his face. "Doctor Fritz Schnitzle? This is the man Mr. Merriwell told me to meet and look out for. Awful! awful!"

CHAPTER VII.

THE CLIMAX OF THE DECEPTION.

"Vat vass dot?" cried the doctor. "For me you vass to look out? Vass dot eet?"

"That's right, sir," nodded Courtney, speaking in a faint voice. "You see I am Professor Courtney, instructor of wrestling and boxing at this school."

"Mine gootness! Vass dot correction? Vell, vell, vell! Vy didn't I tol' you so before? I suppositioned dot you peen vun of der bupils. Yah. By Chorge! I vass gladness to meet your acquaintance. It vass der pleasure of your life to seen me."

Schnitzle seized Courtney's hand and shook it furiously until the man forcibly pulled away.

"Come to dese arms right avay alretty quick!" shouted the doctor. "Let me folt you to your bosom, mine tear sir."

"Stand off!" cried Courtney, extending his hand to keep the little man at bay. "Don't touch me!"

Needless to say, the boys were convulsed with laughter, although they endeavored to repress and restrain their merriment.

Doctor Schnitzle was not to be held off in such a manner. Ducking suddenly, he came in under Courtney's arm and grabbed the Englishman about the waist, at the same time back-heeling him.

The wrestling instructor sat down with great violence upon the snowy ground.

"You blooming duffer!" he cried, glaring at the little man.

"Excuse yourself! excuse yourself!" chattered Schnitzle. "It vass carelessness on your part. I vill hellup you to stant on my feet again."

He seized Courtney by the collar and gave him a pull and a lift. The Englishman was thus drawn partly upright, when of a sudden the doctor seemed to slip, and back Courtney went, with a thud that made his teeth rattle.

"Stop dot pushing me, poys!" cried Schnitzle, with seeming anger. "I vill not stood for it! You should been ashamed of myself! Brofessor Gourtney, you haf some vary pad poys. You vill haf to restriction them. Yah."

"Don't touch me again!" rasped Courtney. "Don't put your hands on me! I'll get up of my own accord, you blooming lunatic!"

Doctor Schnitzle drew back and folded his arms, glaring at the Englishman as the latter rose to his feet.

"To me," he said, "your words haf made der great offense. Py you I haf been insulted. Yah. In Chermany ve do not acceptance der insult. You vill haf to vighted me py a duel. I vill challenge you der spot on to meet me mit deadly veapons at der earliest possible moment next year."

Courtney had a suspicious air. He seemed inclined to inspect the self-claimed German doctor in a close and critical manner.

Suddenly Schnitzle uttered a yell.

"See dot, see dot, Brofessor Gourtney!" he shouted. "Vun of your pad poys mit my scatchel iss running avay! Stop, poy—stop! Let dot scatchel drop you!"

It was Tommy Chuckleson who had seized the satchel and fled with it. Immediately Doctor Schnitzle started in pursuit, wildly waving his umbrella and uttering loud cries. The rest of the boys joined in the chase, and Courtney came hurrying after them.

Tommy fled round the gymnasium, with his pursuers stringing out behind. All the way round the building went the boy with the satchel. As he reached the front again he dashed up the steps and disappeared inside.

The pursuing lads grew hilarious as they followed

the little doctor, who literally tore into the gymnasium after Tommy.

"Catch him, Snitz, catch him!" they whooped.

On the main floor of the gym a few ambitious boys were at work. One of them was leaping a "horse," and he came over just in time to light astride Doctor Schnitzle's neck as the doctor plunged beneath the structure. Schnitzle shot up into the air and left the boy sprawling on his back.

"Stop dot thief!" he yelled. "My scatchel iss running avay mit him!"

Two ladders had been set to form a triangle in the middle of the room. Tommy ran up one of them and down the other. Doctor Schnitzle ran up one and rolled down the other.

"Wow!" he cried, as he struck at the bottom and sat up. "Vy dit dot floor come ub so quickness to meet me?"

A moment later he was on his feet and after Tommy again. His coat tails flapped behind him, and one end of his scarf waved wildly.

Tommy dodged here and there, looking for an opportunity to escape from the gym. The pursuit was so hot, however, that he found he could not get out through the door by which he had entered, so he ran into the room where the big swimming-tank was located.

Round the edge of this tank dashed the fugitive, with Doctor Schnitzle still prancing after him.

The other boys came in, but they stood back and cheered for Tommy and the doctor.

"Go it, Chuck!"

"He's gaining on you, Tommy!"

"Let yourself out there, Chuck!"

"Leg it Schnitz, old boy!"

"You'll catch him in a minute, doc!"

"He can't get away from you!"

"Oh, wow! wow! Talk about your circuses!"

His face crimson with rage, Charles Courtney burst through the mass of boys and rushed out to the edge of the tank.

"Stop this disgraceful business!" he shouted. "Stop it, I say!"

"Yah, stob it! stob it!" shrieked Schnitzle.

Courtney attempted to stop the doctor as the latter came round. The little man dodged the professor's outstretched hand. He was still clinging to his umbrella, which he now held with the crooked handle behind him. As he passed Courtney, the handle caught the Englishman by one ankle, and an instant later there was a great shout from the boys, for the wrestling in-

structor was yanked off his feet and sent plunging headlong into the tank.

Apparently wholly unaware of what he had done, Doctor Schnitzle continued racing after Chuckleson and shouting for him to drop the "satchel." By this time Tommy was beginning to lose his wind. Suddenly he tripped and fell. The satchel was slammed down upon the tiling with a crash, and it flew open.

Instantly half-a-dozen mice leaped out and began scampering in all directions.

Now it happened that nothing in the world could frighten Tommy Chuckleson as much as mice. One of the little creatures ran over Chuck, who shrieked "murder," kicking and flopping around like a person in a fit.

The boys simply howled with laughter.

In the meantime, Courtney had reached the steps and was climbing out of the tank, water pouring in streams from his clothing.

Doctor Schnitzle rushed up to him and grabbed him by the shoulder.

"Vere vass my umprella?" he yelled. "You vass leafing my umprella to drown! Go back undt let dot umprella get you!"

"You wretch! you impostor!" palpitated Courtney, making a grab at the little man.

Schnitzle dodged, but Courtney's fingers caught in his whiskers. In a twinkling those whiskers were torn off, and the Englishman held them aloft.

They were false!

"Impostor!" shouted Courtney, again.

"Doctor Schnitzle" waited not another instant, but turned like a flash and legged it for the door.

"If anypody tries to stab me it vill pe at the beril uf my life!" he yelled.

Some of those boys were dazed, but a few of them were quick-witted enough to understand the joke, and the latter hastened to push the others aside, thus giving the fugitive a chance to get out.

"Stop him!" roared Courtney. "I command you to stop that impostor!"

"We'll stop him, sir!" cried one of the boys.

"That's right, we'll stop him!" shouted others.

Then they turned as if pursuing the fugitive, but jammed in the door, where they fought and struggled in a pretended endeavor to get out of the room. In this manner they checked Courtney when he tried to rush after the escaping joker.

When the jam was finally broken and they did hurry out, "Dr. Schnitzle" had vanished.

CHAPTER VIII.

A CLEVER LITTLE RASCAL.

Bolivar Jones, a boy with a big head, which rolled about in a heavy manner on a spindling neck, was the roommate of Bob Bubbs. Bolivar had a queer protrusion like a knob over each eye, and the boys had nicknamed him "Bumpy." Bumpy slipped up to his room after the excitement had subsided somewhat and found Bubbs, undressed to his underclothes, rolling up a bundle of clothing.

"Jingoes!" gasped Bob, starting as Bumpy dodged into the room. "Whew! you gave me a jump then."

"I don't wonder," said Jones. "Oh, Towser, you're in trouble—you're in trouble! Oh, you've raised the dickens to-day! Oh, you'll catch it! Oh, I wouldn't be in your shoes for a million dollars! Oh, I'm glad I didn't have anything to do with it!"

"Oh, slush! Give me that cord. Get a wiggle on you! I've got to tie this truck up."

"What is it?" asked Bumpy.

"Why, it's all that remains of Doctor Fritz Schnitzle. It's my disguise, Bolivar."

"Oh, you'll catch it!" repeated Bumpy. "If they do find the disguise, I'll swear I don't own it. My goodness! but there's an awful fuss over this! Old Courtney is furious! He's pumpin' the fellers. He's tryin' to find out who done it."

"Did it, Bumpy—did it. Your grammar's something terrible."

"Oh, yourn ain't so much!" sneered Jones, his heavy head rolling round and round. "Jingoes! I thought Chuck was in for it, but he wiggled out of the mess pretty slick."

"How did he wiggle out of it?" asked Bob, as he hastily knotted the cord about the bundle.

"Why, he said he knew you were an impostor, and that's why he grabbed your satchel and ran with it. He wanted to show you up. I guess Courtney believes him."

"Well, say, Bumpy, I certainly did stir them up some, didn't I? What's the use of stagnating? Might as well have a little fun once in awhile."

"But you'll be sorry," prophesied Jones, wagging his head feebly from side to side. "They'll catch you."

"Oh, croak—croak!"

"What are you going to do with that stuff? Where are you going to hide it?"

"Think I'll chuck it under the bed now and get it out of the room to-night. I've got to get this grease-paint off my face. Where's that cocoa-butter? Here it is."

Bubbs seized the piece of cocoa-butter and hastily

rubbed the stuff over his face. Then he took a handkerchief and wiped off the grease-paint. Following this, he applied soap and water, scrubbing industriously until the last touch of make-up was removed.

As Bob was wiping his face there came a rattling at the door-knob, and into the room popped Tommy Chuckleson.

"Sh!" hissed Chuck, as he softly closed the door and held up one hand. "Hold your breath for about twenty minutes."

"I can't," said Bubbs; "my breath's too strong. It gets away from me. What's the matter, anyhow?"

"Matter? Lord, Towser, there's blood on the moon! But I'm going to kill you—yes, I'm going to kill you right now!"

"What for?"

"Mice. You deserve it. Why, confound you! I grabbed that satchel and ran with it to give you a chance to sneak. I thought you'd start the bunch chasing me and then you'd dust. I never dreamed you had a whole nest of mice in the old satchel."

Bubbs chuckled.

"That was part of my scheme, which didn't work just as I planned," he explained. "I had an idea that I'd let them out on Courtney. I was going to prescribe pills for him and open up the grip to get them. What became of the valise, anyhow?"

"Courtney's got it. He's got your umbrella, too. He says they will prove clues to the detection of the perpetrator of the outrage."

"My, my, Chuck! those are large words."

"Large words!" snickered Tommy. "You handed out a few fancy ones yourself. Bob, you're a good actor, but you're a blamed fool."

"Thanks," said Bubbs. "You're complimentary, Chuck."

"Do you know what they're doing now?"

"Can't guess."

"Well, they're beginning to search the rooms. They're going through every room."

"I told you! I told you!" spluttered Jones. "They'll find that bundle, Towser!"

Bubbs paused, and surveyed the bundle with dismay.

"I don't know but you're right, Bumpy," he admitted. "Can't seem to hide that very well."

"Lordy, you're a goner!" declared Chuck. "If they find your rig, you'll be electrocuted."

"Wait a minute," said Bob, as he caught up the bundle and hurried to the window. "I think I can fix that."

Opening the window, he caught one end of the bun-

dle string to the fastening of the window-shutter, permitting the bundle to hang a foot or two below the window-sill.

"Got to chance it," he said, as he closed the window. "If Courtney or any one inclined to blab sees that out there, the jig's up. If he comes here to search, I don't believe he'll look out of the window."

"You'll excuse me," said Chuck. "I think I'll dust."

"And I think I'll dress," muttered Bob.

However, Bubbs was not fully dressed when Charles Courtney, accompanied by Roberts, the swimming-instructor, knocked on the door and stalked into the room.

"What are you doing, sir?" demanded the Englishman, regarding Bubbs accusingly.

"Just putting on my collar and necktie," answered Bob.

"I see you are. Why have you had your collar and necktie off?"

"The collar was too tight, sir. I had to change it."

"Oh, you did? What's this?"

Courtney picked up the handkerchief with which Bubbs had wiped the grease-paint from his face.

"That?" said Bob. "Why, it's my handkerchief."

"And what's this in this bowl? What's all this red stuff in the water?"

"That? Why, that—that is blood."

"Blood?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where did it come from?"

"Came from my nose, sir. I've just had a severe attack of nosebleed. It always troubles me when my collar is too tight, sir."

"Oh, indeed? Well, I have a few questions to ask you."

"I'm at your service, sir."

"Did you see that fellow who impersonated Doctor Schnitzle?"

"I regret to say that I did not see him, sir. I was confined to my room with nosebleed, sir. I've been told about it. My roommate told me about it, you know. It seems to have been a most disgraceful affair, Professor Courtney."

"Disgraceful? It was outrageous! The culprit shall be punished!"

"That's right," nodded Roberts; "he shall be punished!"

"I don't blame you one bit, if all I hear is true," said Bubbs. "Why, they tell me he actually tripped you into the swimming-tank, Professor Courtney. I hope it isn't true. Your clothes are not damp."

"I've changed my clothes," growled the Englishman. "Come, Roberts, we'll search this room."

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed Bubbs. "Why do you search my room, sir? I hope you don't suspect me of anything, sir."

"Some boy rigged himself up and perpetrated that outrage," declared Courtney. "We're looking for his disguise. If we find it in this room, you know what will happen."

"I'm surprised to think you can suspect me, professor," sighed Bob, tears appearing in his eyes. "If my poor mother should know I was suspected of such a thing, she would have something to say."

"Yes," whispered Bolivar Jones to himself, "I bet she would say it's just like him."

"Well, if I find that disguise in this room, I'll have something to say," threatened Courtney.

"Let me assist you," urged Bubbs. "I think I can aid you. Will you look in the closet? Will you look under the bed? Will you look under the dresser? Perhaps you'd like to look into these drawers?"

The little rascal danced around and opened up everything for inspection.

Although the two men searched that room thoroughly, they found no trace of the disguise, save what remained on the handkerchief and in the wash-bowl.

"Very singular," muttered Courtney, in disappointment. "Well, this doesn't end it. I shall follow this matter up. I'll yet discover the culprit!"

"Thank you, sir, I hope you do," said Bubbs, as he bowed them out of the room.

Closing the door, he added:

"Not!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE MYSTERY OF THE BUNDLE.

Courtney had been directed to Bubbs' room by Victor Maynard, who told the wrestling master that several of the boys were certain Bubbs had perpetrated the imposition.

When Courtney and Roberts left the room in disappointment after the search, Maynard was waiting for them in the corridor.

"Did you catch him, professor—did you catch him?" he eagerly asked.

The Englishman gave Vic a disgusted look.

"Get away from here!" he growled. "You were mistaken."

"Oh, no, sir," protested Maynard, "I was right—I know I was right! Bubbs did the trick."

"Well, there's no evidence against him."

"Didn't you find any proof, sir?"

"Nothing of value. I presume he had time to dispose of his disguise somewhere outside of his room. We searched thoroughly and found nothing of it."

"No wonder you didn't find it," whispered Vic, grasping Courtney's arm. "You didn't look in the right place."

"We looked everywhere. I tell you it was not in that room, boy."

"That's right, it wasn't in the room," grinned Vic. "I just came in from outside, sir. Some of the boys are wondering what it is Bubbs and Jones have hanging out of their window. It's a bundle, all tied up with a string and hitched to the shutters."

"Eh?" exclaimed Courtney. "A bundle? Why, that may be what I'm looking for."

"Of course it is," nodded Maynard. "There's no question about it. He tied the stuff up in a bundle and hung it out of the window. If you go right back there, you'll find it."

Thus it happened that, before Bob had found time to take the bundle in and while he was starting toward the window with the intention of doing so, Courtney and Roberts unexpectedly reentered the room.

Jones turned pale and betrayed agitation, while Bubbs halted in his tracks and regarded the two instructors quizzingly.

"Did you forget anything, gentlemen?" asked Bob smoothly.

"Yes, we forgot something," answered Courtney, a grim look of triumph on his unpleasant face. "We forgot something that is very important."

"Very important," agreed Roberts.

"Dear me!" said Bob, looking around the room searchingly. "I don't seem to see it anywhere, gentlemen."

"You think you're a blooming clever chap, don't you?" cried Courtney. "You've had lots of sport today, haven't you? Well, sir, you will pay for it! I'll see to that!"

"My gracious!" gasped Bob. "What does this mean, Professor Courtney? Is it possible you are threatening me? I'm sure I don't understand it, sir."

"You'll understand it in a minute, you impudent young scoundrel! I know where to place my hand on the evidence that will convict you. Now, sir, I give you one chance to make a full confession, and you'd better accept that chance instantly."

Bob clasped his hands and rolled his eyes upward toward the ceiling.

"Isn't this dreadful?" he said. "It breaks my heart to think any one should talk to me in such a manner! Oh, sir, how can you do it?"

"Stop that shamming!" snapped Courtney. "Don't play the hypocrite before me! I see through you! Are you going to confess of your own accord, or shall I produce the evidence?"

"I have nothing to confess," asserted Bob. "Where is your evidence?"

"Outside that window," declared the Englishman. "I know what's out there."

Bumpy's head gave a lurch and nearly snapped his neck off short. His knees seemed to weaken, and his face became ghastly pale.

"Towser's caught!" he whispered to himself. "The jig's up! He'll catch it now!"

It may be that Bubbs was astonished and dismayed, but, if so, he managed to conceal the fact cleverly. Instead of betraying dismay, he glanced wonderingly toward the window, and then slowly turned and surveyed Courtney.

"That window, sir?" he questioned. "Why, what is there outside that window?"

"Oh, keep it up, you little scoundrel!" rasped the wrestling master. "I see you're inclined to bluff it out as long as you can, but it won't do you any good. Your disguise, which you wore when you pretended to be Doctor Schnitzle, is hanging outside that window, suspended by a string to the shutter fastening."

"You must be dreaming, Professor Courtney!" exclaimed Bob. "My dear sir, I hope there's nothing the matter with you!"

"By Jove! there'll be something the matter with you directly!" shouted Courtney, as he strode across the room and flung open the window.

He thrust his head out and looked around for the bundle.

There was no bundle to be seen!

With his hands on the window-sill, Courtney remained staring around for several moments. His flushed face grew pale, and a look of intense disappointment settled upon it. Slowly he withdrew into the room and turned to face Bubbs, whom he found regarding him with an expression of pitying sympathy.

"Well, sir," said the boy coolly, "where is the bundle?"

"Blow me if I know!" muttered the Englishman. "What's the matter with your roommate? Look out for him, boy; he's having a fit."

In truth, Bolivar Jones seemed to be having a fit. He was leaning against the wall and shaking in every limb like a person with an attack of the ague. At the same time his heavy head rolled about in a most astonishing manner, occasionally bumping against the wall as he endeavored to straighten up.

"Poor Bumpy!" exclaimed Bubbs, with an expression of deep sympathy. "He's quite overcome by the cruel manner in which you have talked to me. Bumpy is very sympathetic. You shocked him."

"Look here, Roberts," said Courtney, "these boys must have taken that bundle in after we left the room. We'll search again."

"That's right," nodded Roberts; "we'll search again."

"Is it possible you're still unsatisfied?" cried Bubbs. "Go ahead and search! Look anywhere—look everywhere! Tear up the floors! Sound the walls! There may be secret hiding-places under the floors or in the

walls. But let me tell you, gentlemen, that I think you're carrying this thing too far."

They gave him no further heed, but ransacked the room thoroughly, the result being wholly disappointing.

"Of course I'm not in a position to demand an apology," said Bubbs hotly, as the searchers finished their task. "Still, I think something is due me. I have been falsely accused, as you must confess."

"We'll go, Roberts," muttered the wrestling instructor. "I'll have something to say to that boy who told us."

"Good day, gentlemen," bowed Bubbs, at the door. "Come back again as soon as you please. Never mind me. Don't take my tender feelings into consideration in the least."

He closed the door behind them and turned toward his roommate, a smile on his face.

"My goodness, Towser!" gasped Jones; "what became of that bundle?"

"You can search me!" answered Bubbs.

CHAPTER X.

THE REAL DOCTOR SCHNITZLE.

Charles Courtney was literally boiling with rage as he encountered Vic Maynard in the corridor.

"Well," grinned Vic, "I suppose you found it, all right?"

"You're a fool—a blooming fool!" snarled the wrestling instructor, as he seized Maynard by the shoulder. "Either that, or you're trying to make sport of me. I believe that's it!"

"That's it!" exclaimed Roberts. "He's making us both appear ridiculous, Courtney."

"Why—why," gasped Vic, "didn't you find the bundle?"

"There was no bundle," declared the Englishman.

"Did you look outside the window?"

"Certainly I looked. Oh, you succeeded in your part of this rascally business, my fine fellow, but you'll be sorry for it! Yes, I looked for it out of the window, and outside of that window were half-a-dozen boys who saw me. They grinned at me. I won't be made ridiculous, my lad, and I'll convince you of it. I'll make an example of you, sir."

Maynard was filled with unspeakable dismay. He tried to say something, but the words seemed to stick in his throat.

"Now, don't grimace and gurgle at me!" rasped Courtney.

"He's laughing!" snapped Roberts.

"Oh, laughing, are you?" almost shouted the Englishman, as he clutched Vic by both shoulders and shook him until his teeth rattled. "Don't you dare laugh!"

"I—I'm not lul-lul-lul-laughing!" chattered the bewildered boy. "On my honor, sus-sus-sus-sir, I'm not lul-lul-lul-laughing!"

"You, at least," vowed Courtney, "shall be properly punished for your part in the affair."

"I wouldn't punish him now," cautioned Roberts. "I'd wait for Mr. Merriwell."

"But I must shake him—I *will* shake him!" cried the Englishman, as he again made Maynard's teeth chatter.

While being shaken in this manner Victor caught his tongue between his teeth and bit it so that he uttered a howl of pain.

"Oh, wow! oh, dear!" he moaned, clapping a hand over his mouth. "Oh, my tongue! I've bitten it!"

"That's what usually happens to a fibbing tongue," said Roberts. "Stop, Courtney, you're losing your temper."

"Losing it?" frothed the wrestling instructor. "By Jove! I've lost it already, don't you know! Why shouldn't I lose my temper? These young rascals have made a blooming show of me."

Roberts seized the Englishman and drew him away.

"Come," he urged; "we'll report the entire affair to Mr. Merriwell."

Courtney was still growling and spluttering as they descended the stairs and left the building. On the steps they collided with a stranger, a small, plainly dressed man, carrying a valise and umbrella and wearing green goggles. This man looked like a German.

"I beg your pardon, chentlemen!" he exclaimed. "I vass looking for Mr. Frank Merriwell. Could you tol me vere to findt him? I vass Doctor Fritz Schnitzle."

"W-h-a-t?" yelled Courtney, who seemed to have entirely lost his temper and judgment. "Here's another one of them, Roberts! They think I'm a fool, Roberts! They're trying to keep this thing up, but I've got this one, and I'll not let him escape me."

He seized the stranger and held onto him.

"Coot cracious!" gasped the man who had announced himself as Doctor Fritz Schnitzle. "Vat vass der matter? Haf I made a mistake? I vass directed to dis blace as der American School uf Athletic Developments; but, py chimminy, I 'believe it vass a lunatic asylums!"

"Oh, you can't fool any one with that sort of talk!" rasped Courtney. "Your pretended German accent is decidedly snide. You can't talk like a German if you try."

"I haf no accent, sir!" asserted the stranger, in high indignation. "I speak the English language wid correct bronounciation. Yah."

"Oh, yah! yah!" sneered Courtney. "Just wait a minute, and I'll see who you are! I'll show you up!"

He knocked off the stranger's hat with a single blow. With another sweep of his hand he smashed the green goggles. Then he seized the man by his long hair and gave a yank as he cried:

"Off comes your wig!"

"Murder! hellup!" shrieked the assaulted one. "Gott in himmel! I vill haf mineself to defend!"

In astonishment Courtney released his hold on the

man's hair. A moment later Doctor Schnitzle—the real Doctor Schnitzle—went at the Englishman hammer and tongs. Dropping his satchel, he seized the umbrella with both hands and whacked Courtney over the head with such force that the wrestling instructor was knocked off the steps and landed sprawling on the snow. The doctor had a temper. He felt himself insulted and outraged, and he proceeded to jump on Courtney and pummel him with both fists.

"My hair out you vill pull, hey?" shouted Schnitzle. "Py cracious! a lesson I vill teach you!"

The racket had brought a dozen boys to the spot, and as many more had thrown open their windows and were looking out.

At this juncture Frank Merriwell, having returned from his snow-shoeing expedition, came rushing up.

"What's this?" he cried. "What's going on here? Hold on, gentlemen! Stop this business instantly!"

He grasped Doctor Schnitzle and lifted him off the bewildered Englishman.

"Who are you?" demanded Merry.

"I vass Doctor Fritz Schnitzle, undt I haf peen insulted and assaulted alretty soon since my arrifal here."

"Doctor Schnitzle!" gasped Frank. "Why, what does this mean, Courtney? I told you to meet the doctor and take care of him. Is this the way you follow my instructions?"

Looking both enraged and ashamed, Courtney rose to his feet.

"It's a mistake, Mr. Merriwell," he protested. "I thought him an impostor. These boys have been raising a disgraceful mess since you left, sir. One of them disguised himself and pretended that he was Doctor Schnitzle. I thought this was another trying the same trick."

"Undt out my hair you tried to pull der roots py!" rasped the German physician, glaring at Courtney. "Py der collar you grabbed me undt you insulted me my face to. Then, py chincher! you hit me ofer der head, undt my goggles you smashed. Vass it a vonderment dot I vass as mat as plazes?"

The boys of the snow-shoeing class were gathering about and asking questions. Merry realized that this was not the place for explanations, and immediately he ordered all the boys to their rooms.

"Gentlemen," he said, addressing the doctor and Courtney, "you will follow me to my private office. We'll get at the bottom of this affair."

"I hope you succeed in doing so, sir," muttered Courtney.

CHAPTER XI.

FRANK'S COMMAND.

Besides the four persons who entered Frank Merriwell's private office no one knew exactly what took place there. Of course, the boys were sure Courtney gave a full account of what had happened.

In the meantime, Towser Bubbs and his roommate were wondering what had become of the bundle of

clothing. While they were speculating over this there came a gentle tap on the door, which was opened a bit, and Hi Bemis thrust his head in.

"Hello!" grinned the tall boy. "How's Trix? Lost anything down here?"

"Enter, Hiram—enter," invited Bubbs. "Gently but securely close the portal behind you."

Bemis tiptoed into the room and shut the door.

"I've been fishin'," he said.

"Eh? fishing?" questioned Bob.

"Yep. Caught something, too."

"What did you catch?"

"A whole suit of clothes," answered the tall boy. "He! he! My room's right over this one. I heard some fellers down below and looked out. They were lookin' up at your winder, so I opened my winder and squinted down. You had something hanging outside, and I gut curious. Kinder thought I'd like to know what it was. I brought a whole lot of fishin'-tackle with me, so I jest rigged up a line and hook and went fishin'. I hooked up that bundle——"

Bubbs flung his arms about the tall boy, pretending to burst into tears.

"Bless you, Hiram—bless you! You saved my life! Old Courtney came in here looking for that bundle, and he would have found it if you had not hooked it up."

"I guess that's right," grinned Hiram. "I was lookin' out when I seen him chuck his head outer the winder. Say, Towser, all the fellers are onto you now. But you want to soak that sneak, Maynard."

"Vic Maynard?"

"Yep. He peached on you, but I guess, by jinks, that he gut the worst of it. I was comin' down-stairs arter Courtney hunted round in this room, and I seen him give Maynard an awful shakin'. Maynard was waitin' out in the corridor."

"Ah-ha! I know mine enemy!" declared Bubbs, striking a tragic attitude. "He shall feel the weight of my vengeance!"

"He is a sneak," said Bumpy. "I thought so the first time I saw him. I don't like him, and I don't like Arthur Irving, either."

"But, look here," said Hiram, "I want to know what I'm going to do with that bundle. I ain't goin' to keep it in my room, you bet yer life! If Courtney had continued to hunt, I'd thrown it out of the winder."

"Return it to me, thou noble one," instructed Bubbs. "Your reward shall be exceedingly great."

"I don't want no reward, but I'd jest like to know how this business's going to turn out. Say, I'm afraid Frank Merriwell will make an investigation, and somebody will put him onto you, Towser. What do you s'pose he'll do if he does find out you were it?"

"I shall expect to feed on bread and water in a dark, deep dungeon cell," said the unterrified Bubbs. "But, oh, jingoes! wasn't it the grand climax when old Courtney jumped on the real Doctor Schnitz? Whether I'm exposed or not, that blooming Britisher is going to have it in for me. I feel in my bones that he and I are

due to clash. I suppose Merriwell will call the whole school up before him and demand a confession from the wretched culprit."

"Are you going to confess, Towser?" asked Jones.

"What, me—me confess?" cried Bubbs.

"More of your fine grammar!" sneered Bumpy. "Yes, are you going to confess?"

"Did I confess anything when old Courtney informed me he knew that bundle was hanging outside the window? Not a word did he wring from these sealed lips. Only chumps confess. If you brazen it out, usually there'll be a loophole of escape."

Contrary to the expectations of the boys, Merriwell did not call them up before him that day. The following morning, however, before commencing his lecture on Pure Air, Frank gave them a little talk on discipline.

"Boys," he said, "you will find posted in the anteroom a set of rules and regulations. Those rules and regulations were not there yesterday. You had not been given an opportunity to know what is demanded of you at this school. Practical joking is decidedly dangerous, especially to the joker. A practical joke often turns out to be a serious affair if carried too far. I want each and every one of you to read those rules and regulations. I shall expect you to abide by them. Those who fail to do so certainly will be punished upon detection. I think it best under the circumstances to let bygones be bygones. Those rules take effect now, to-day, from this minute. And whoever disobeys or transgresses them will be called to account."

Then, without further reference to the "Schnitzle joke," as the boys now called it, he proceeded with his lecture.

After the lecture the boys hastened to the gymnasium. There they were arranged into various classes, and set at work under the direction of the instructors.

Bob Bubbs did not fail to note that Courtney gave him more than one sullen look.

"Oh, he loves me—not," muttered the little fellow. "Mr. Merriwell may have overlooked that joke, but old Courtney hasn't."

Bob was right. The Englishman was inclined to be revengeful, and he waited an opportunity to punish the boy who had made him appear ridiculous.

That opportunity came within a short time, for Bubbs displayed considerable skill in wrestling, and Courtney singled him out for "special instructions."

"You're crude in your style, boy," declared the Englishman. "You don't wrestle in proper form. Step onto the mat with me. I'll show you what I mean."

Now Bubbs was like an eel, being remarkably quick in all his movements. When Courtney attempted to trip the little fellow, Bob wound himself about the instructor's legs and hung there like a leech.

"Stop that!" snapped the Englishman. "That's not wrestling!"

"That's my style, sir," innocently said the boy.

"Stand up properly!" flung back Courtney, giving the lad a shake. "Do the way I tell you! I'll show you a few trips."

A moment later the instructor back-heeled Bob, but the boy twisted about as he fell, and came down on his stomach.

Some of the spectators laughed, which seemed to enrage Courtney, for the man pounced on the fallen boy, pinning him down with a knee driven into the small of his back.

"Perhaps you think I can't put you over!" sneered the man, as he seized one of Bob's arms, grasping it by the elbow with one hand and the wrist with the other. In this manner he secured a hold by which he might easily break Bob's arm. With unreasoning anger he gave a savage twist, causing an exclamation of pain to escape the boy's lips.

Unnoticed by Courtney, Merriwell had approached and was watching the affair. In a twinkling he leaped forward and seized the Englishman's shoulder.

"Stop that, Courtney!" he cried. "It's your business to teach wrestling! You can't punish any boy in this school with jiu-jitsu tricks! You know well enough that the lad can't turn, no matter how much you twist his arm, as long as you hold him pinned down with your knee."

Abashed, but still angry, Courtney looked up.

"He ought to be punished!" growled the man. "I don't think you did right, Mr. Merriwell, in overlooking his offense of yesterday."

"Look here," said Merry, "you're not employed here to tell me whether I do right or wrong. I don't like it, and I'll have no more of it."

Courtney rose, his face ashen with anger.

"I don't think your school will be much of a success!" he sneered.

"Possibly not if I retain you as one of my instructors," said Merry. "You may report in my private office in thirty minutes."

Having given this command, Merriwell turned to Bubbs, who was rubbing his arm.

"Do you think he hurt you much?" asked Frank.

"Oh, I don't think he did, sir," answered Bob. "But I believe I have you to thank for it. You stopped him just in time. I seemed to feel the bones cracking."

"Report to Doctor Schnitzle, and let him give you something to rub on that arm," said Merry.

Then he turned and walked out of the gymnasium.

Thirty minutes later Frank was writing at his desk, when Courtney opened the door and stood waiting.

"Come in," said Merry.

Courtney paused near the desk. After a moment, Frank pushed aside his writing and turned to the man.

"Courtney," he said quietly, "you won't do."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"I mean you have shown plainly that you cannot govern your temper. A man in your position must govern his temper, especially when he has to deal with boys. These boys here are not strong. The most of them have pronounced physical defects. A wrestling instructor, who attempts to punish a lad with whom he is angry and does so under cover of a pretended wrestling lesson, is not the man I want."

"Do you mean that you're going to discharge me?" asked the Englishman huskily.

"Yes," answered Frank flatly. "I have written a check for you. You came here on trial; that was distinctly understood. I might discharge you without paying you a dollar, but I shall not do so. Here is your check. It is for a month's work. I wish you to sign this receipt."

"I don't think you're treating me right, sir," muttered the Englishman. "You're not giving me a square show."

"I'm treating you more than just, Courtney, and you know it. I warned you yesterday, when we had our private talk after your unfortunate assault on Doctor Schnitzle, that I would not tolerate an instructor who lost his head in the manner in which you lost yours. You attempted to tell me then how I should maintain discipline here. I was compelled to check you. You don't know your place, Courtney. You even insisted that I should make a thorough investigation and punish the perpetrator of that practical joke. Had you not insisted so much, I might have been inclined to investigate more. As it was, I simply posted those rules and regulations and informed the boys that they would be expected to abide by them. When you threatened in my presence to get even with the boy who perpetrated the outrage, as you called it, I warned you against it. I told you I would attend to all matters of that sort. If any one in this school is to be reprimanded, I'll do so after my own ideas of the proper method. There's no use to talk this matter over any further. Sign your name to that receipt."

Merry handed Courtney a pen, and, with a trembling hand, the Englishman signed. Then he walked to the door, where he paused and slowly turned to face Frank. In a moment all the rage smoldered in his heart burst into flame.

"Merriwell," he snarled, "you've treated me shamefully, and I swear I'll get even with you for it! I'll do my best to ruin your school, and I think I'll succeed in hurting it some!"

Out shot Frank's arm, and his finger pointed at the door.

"Go, sir!" he said, in a tone that Courtney dared not disobey.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WORK OF A RASCAL.

Besides the cause stated for the discharge of Courtney, there was another reason why Frank had decided to get rid of the man.

Merry had discovered that Courtney drank. Although the Englishman used liquor in moderation, as he termed it, the odor could be perceived on his breath almost constantly. As his duty was to instruct boys in wrestling and boxing, it was certain that some of the lads could not fail to detect this odor.

Temperance was one of Frank Merriwell's hobbies.

It was his belief that under no circumstances should a boy use liquor for a beverage. This being the case, he felt that in keeping Courtney as one of the instructors at the school he would place a bad example before the boys.

There were reasons why he did not charge Courtney with drinking. He knew the man would deny it, and beyond the odor upon Courtney's breath there was absolutely no proof against him. The Englishman would claim himself unjustly accused and attempt to enter into argument about it. Therefore, as there was another just cause for the man's dismissal, Frank said nothing about drink.

Courtney was in a sullen rage when he left Merriwell's office. Outside he turned and shook his clenched fist at the door as he fiercely muttered:

"I'll show you, you blooming duffer, that you can't kick me out like a dog! By Jove, I'll make you sorry for this! No man ever hit a Courtney that he didn't get it back with interest. I'll not let any grass grow under my feet, either. You have no one to fill my place at present. If you should lose another assistant, you'd be in a bad hole. I'm going to see Roberts."

Instead of proceeding directly to his room, Courtney hastened back to the gymnasium and sought the swimming instructor.

Roberts was there, having recently finished work with a class of tyros. The man had dressed in an ordinary suit, and was about to leave the gymnasium.

"Wait a minute, Roberts," said Courtney. "I wish to speak with you, don't you know. Is there any one around?"

"Some boys in there," answered Roberts, motioning toward one of the side rooms. "What's the matter, Courtney? You are pale."

"Pale, am I? I should think I might be. Have you anything more to do at present?"

"No, my work is over until three in the afternoon."

"Then come to my room. We can talk there without being heard, I fancy."

Courtney's room was on the second floor of the dormitory. On entering it, the Englishman closed the door behind them and motioned for Roberts to sit down.

"I'm packing up, don't you know," he said.

"Packing up?" said Roberts, in surprise. "Why, what do you mean?"

"I'm leaving."

"You don't mean it!"

"Oh, yes, I do. I'm through. I've quit."

"What for?"

"Blooming good reasons. You know I didn't like the way Merriwell talked to me yesterday. He gave me a dressing down because I lost my head and thumped the real Doctor Schnitzle."

"Oh, it wasn't as bad as that," declared Roberts. "He didn't give you a dressing down. He was very mild in what he said."

"Perhaps you thought it mild, but I didn't. He had no right to talk to me in that manner. Further than

that, he should have followed up the affair with an investigation and meted out punishment to that little rascal who perpetrated the joke."

"You mean Bubbs?"

"Of course I mean Bubbs. There's no doubt about it, he did the trick. The impudent little puppy made a holy show of me. I became the laughing-stock of the whole school. Every time I think of it my blood boils. Of course, he tripped me intentionally with that umbrella and upset me into the swimming-tank. Now I won't stand that from any one and not retaliate. Merriwell made an excuse that the rules and regulations had not been posted. Deuce take the rules and regulations! The boy knew better than to make a blooming ass of me! Now, what do you suppose, Roberts—what do you suppose this Merriwell did?"

"I haven't an idea," confessed Roberts wonderingly.

"A little while ago I was giving a wrestling lesson in the gymnasium. I saw an opportunity to punish that saucy young brat, and, by Jove! I took it. I threw him on the mat and gave his arm a blooming good twist that made him set up a howl. I didn't know Merriwell was there, you understand. He was there, and out he stepped and grabbed me by the shoulder. Then he charged me with using jiu-jitsu tricks. He talked to me blooming insolent, that's what he did. I wouldn't stand it, Roberts, and I told him so then. I resigned on the spot."

"I'm afraid you were rather hasty, old man," muttered Roberts.

"Not a bit of it. Wait until I finish. Merriwell called me into his private office. Then he started in to dress me down again. By Jove! I came near smashing him between the eyes. He told me he meant to fire me, anyhow. He said I was incompetent. But that's not all he said. Roberts, he spoke of you."

"Of me?" cried the swimming instructor, in surprise.

"Yes, he did," fabricated Courtney. "You see you were with me yesterday when we tried to catch the rascal who played that trick. Merriwell didn't like that. He said you were altogether too forward about it."

"I don't see how he could say such a thing."

"But he did, don't you know. He said more than that. He told me you were not satisfactory in your position. He even hinted that he meant to drop you as soon as he could get a man to fill your place."

"He did, did he?" rasped Roberts, flushing with anger. "Well, I like that! I'll have something to say to him right away."

"Hold on," remonstrated Courtney, as Roberts made a move as if to leave the room. "What good will it do you to go to him? You'll get no satisfaction. Perhaps he'll deny saying anything about you. He'll keep you until he gets another man, and then he'll kick you out. You'll be a fool if you stay. You'd better follow my example and get out at once. That will hurt him more than anything else, for it will leave him with neither a wrestling master nor a swimming instructor."

His old school is doomed to failure, anyhow. It's a crazy idea and never can succeed."

"I can't afford to fire up my job now," confessed Roberts. "I'm broke, Courtney. I haven't ten dollars to my name."

"How much better off do you think you'll be when Merriwell kicks you out?"

"I'll demand pay for the time I've worked, anyhow."

"Perhaps you'll get it, and, perhaps, you won't," sneered the Englishman. "Anyhow, you'll give Merriwell time to fill your place. Now, look here, Roberts, I have some money. I'm not broke. I like you, and I don't want to see you used in such a dirty manner. Leave to-day—leave with me, and I'll loan you enough to tide you along. Will five pounds do?"

"Five pounds?"

"Well, call it twenty-five dollars, then. I can let you have twenty-five, but I will do so only on condition that you leave without giving Merriwell notice. What do you say to that, Roberts?"

"I don't know when I'll be able to pay you that money."

"Don't worry about it, my boy. I'll take it when you get ready, and you needn't hurry. Come now, are you with me?"

"Yes," cried the swimming instructor, "I'm with you! I'll quit! I'll leave right away."

"Good!" laughed Courtney, as he opened his closet and brought out a flask. "Now we'll have a drink on it."

"I hadn't ought to drink," said Roberts. "When I take one drink I want more, and I never know when to stop. I'm not responsible when I'm drinking. I lose my judgment and never think of consequences. I'm liable to do anything."

"Don't worry about that, my boy. We're going to stick together, you and I. Go ahead and take a good pull."

Roberts accepted the flask and followed Courtney's advice by taking a "good pull." Although he was not aware of it, it was a very bad pull for him.

Courtney drank also, smacking his lips at the finish.

"That makes us feel better," he chuckled. "I told Merriwell I'd hurt him, and, by Jove, I will! He's a fool with a lot of money, and I'd like to wring a good sum out of him. I wish I knew how to do it. The people in this howling little hamlet call him lucky."

"No wonder!" growled Roberts. "He's got so much money he's willing to waste it on a lot of puny brats. Besides having money, he has a handsome wife."

Courtney snapped his fingers and struck an attitude.

"His wife!" he exclaimed. "By Jove! there's a suggestion, Roberts. She is handsome. I fancy her looks myself. He's very much taken up with her, don't you know. I have an idea that she was a poor girl and married him for his money. These American girls are all looking out for money."

"Or a title," put in Roberts. "When they have money, they want to marry a duke, or an earl, or something of that sort. They're erratic, Courtney. You

never can tell what one of them will do. There's the Princess Chimay—think of her record."

"I need another drink, Roberts, and I think you do, too. Don't be afraid of it, my boy. There's plenty more."

They drank again, after which Courtney began collecting his personal property preparatory to packing up.

"I'm going now, Roberts," he said. "You'd better wait until dark. Have you much stuff here?"

"Not a great deal. My trunk hasn't arrived. What I have I brought in a couple of suit-cases."

"Then you can carry it away easily. Have a care that Merriwell doesn't detect you leaving. Here's the twenty-five I promised you. Now I can depend on you, can't I?"

"Sure thing. When I give a man my word I stick by it."

"I'll wait for you at the little hotel in town. Meet me there to-night."

"Look here, before you go I want something else."

"What is it?"

"You say you have plenty of whisky. Leave me some."

"I'll fill this flask, my boy. Will that be enough?"

"Perhaps I can make that last me until night," said Roberts.

"I'll have more when you meet me, don't you know. You'd better go on now. Let me glance out to be sure no one sees you leaving."

Courtney opened the door and peered into the corridor.

"It's all right," he said. "Good-by until to-night."

"Until to-night," muttered Roberts, and slipped out.

CHAPTER XIII.

COURTNEY MAKES A BLUNDER.

Late that afternoon Charles Courtney boldly rang the bell at the door of Frank Merriwell's home.

"I wish to see Mrs. Merriwell," he said, when the colored maid opened the door.

Without waiting for an invitation, he pushed past the girl, who demanded his name.

"Tell Mrs. Merriwell that Professor Courtney wishes to see her," said the man, his voice seeming rather thick and unnatural.

Courtney was intoxicated. His flushed face and blood-shot eyes betrayed the fact, and it was with an effort that he walked steadily. In this condition a wild scheme was seething in his befogged brain.

Now it happened that Merriwell had not told his wife of the trouble at the school, and, therefore, Inza knew nothing about Courtney's discharge. After a short time, she came down-stairs and found the man in the reception-room.

He rose as she entered and steadied himself with one hand on the back of a chair.

"Professor Courtney?" said Inza. "It seems to be growing dark; I'll call Eliza and have lights."

"Please don't, Mrs. Merriwell," said Courtney, doing his best to speak calmly. "It's unnecessary, and it will take time. My time is limited."

"Very well," she said wonderingly. "Is there anything wrong?"

"Everything is wrong in this world, Mrs. Merriwell. No one realizes that better than Charles Courtney. Look at me, madam. Here I am in America acting as wrestling and boxing instructor in order to make a living, yet I am a Westmoorland Courtney. When the present Earl of Frothingham dies I shall step into his shoes. I shall become the Earl of Frothingham."

Needless to say, Inza's wonderment grew apace. She could not understand why this man should come to her and make such a statement.

"The Earl of Frothingham is a very old man," Courtney went on. "He is nearly eighty and extremely feeble. At most he cannot live more than a year or two. When he dies the estate becomes mine. I shall be wealthy. In the meantime, I can live."

"Why do you speak to me of this matter?" questioned Inza, beginning to suspect vaguely that the man had been drinking.

"As I said before, everything in this world is wrong. I'm going to leave Bloomfield. Your husband has done me a serious injury. He has discharged me. Had he not perpetrated this outrage, I should be in honor bound to keep within my heart a secret. I feel that I am no longer bound in any manner whatever. Mrs. Merriwell, in America you can never be more than you are at present. In England you may become Lady Frothingham."

Inza was struck dumb with astonishment. She stood staring at the man through the gloom of the waning winter afternoon. It is possible he construed her silence as encouragement.

"I love you!" he went on swiftly. "If you will leave your husband and fly with me, I'll make you my wife! It's easy enough in this country. Every one gets divorced. I'll take you with me to England. What is your answer?"

He stepped forward quickly and grasped her hand.

"Stop, sir!" she cried hoarsely, holding him off with her other hand. "You have been drinking! You don't realize what you are saying and doing! Leave this house instantly!"

"I'll not go without your promise to join me," he declared, his reason and judgment entirely wrecked by drink. "I tell you I love you! Think what I offer you! Now you are the wife of a man who conducts a pitiful school for infirm boys. Go with me and you shall be a lady."

"If you don't instantly release me," said Inza, "I shall call for help!"

"There is no one in the house except the colored maid!" hissed Courtney. "What can she do? You will not call. You must promise to fly with me!"

In spite of her resistance, he succeeded in passing an arm about her and drawing her toward him.

Frightened beyond measure, Inza uttered a loud cry for help.

A door slammed, and into the room sprang a tall, athletic figure. An instant later Courtney lay stretched on the carpet, and Inza was supported on her husband's arm.

"What does this mean?" demanded Frank. "What has that dog been doing? Has he insulted you? I'll finish him here!"

"No, no!" she entreated. "He hasn't harmed me, Frank! Make him go! Don't strike him again!"

"If you try it," snarled Courtney, as he wrenched a pistol from his pocket, "it will be your last blow!"

Out shot Frank's foot, striking the man's hand and sending the pistol flying across the room.

"You miserable cur!" cried Merriwell, seizing Courtney by the collar and yanking him to his feet.

The Englishman tried to strike Frank, but his left wrist was grasped by Merriwell's left hand, while Frank's right arm passed over the fellow's elbow and was locked behind it. In this manner Merry made a lever of Courtney's arm, and a slight backward twist stopped the blow and brought an exclamation of pain from the rascal's lips.

"Out you go!" said Merry, as he started for the door, forcing Courtney along.

The colored girl had heard Inza's cry and appeared in the hall.

"Open the front door, Eliza," directed Frank.

The door was flung open. A moment later Charles Courtney went flying out through that door, being assisted by Merriwell's foot.

Frank hastened back to his wife.

CHAPTER XIV.

TWO MASKED MEN.

"Yas, missus," said Toots, "dat Courtney man suttinly was a bad egg. Mah goodness! he suttinly must av been plumb crazy to come in de house an' raise a rinktum, but Ah rudder think he gut his medicine when Massa Frank took holt ob him. Ah was jest drivin' in from de village when Ah seen dat man come out ob de front do' a-flyin' end ober end. He sholy did look funny when he struck all spraddled out and went skiverin' down de front steps. Yah! yah! yah!"

"I hope we'll see no more of him," said Inza. "He did all he could to hurt Frank. He induced Roberts to leave without notice. That puts lots of work on Frank just at present."

"Ah 'spect dat' right," said Toots. "Ah knows Massa Frank wanted to take yo' out fo' dis sleigh-ride to-day. He says to me, 'Toots, mah boy, Ah oughter take de missus out fo' an airin', but Ah can't, so yo'll hab to do it fo' me.' It suttinly am a great privilege, missus."

They were driving through the country behind a span of Merriwell's finest horses. It was a crisp, beautiful day, and Inza's cheeks glowed.

"Whoa dar, Lightfoot, mah boy!" cried the darky. "Don' yo' git so ambitious. Yo' wanter do all de work. Dat Lightfoot am de finest hoss Ah eber seen, missus. Git up dar, Dick! What yo' shirkin' fo'? Dick sholy am a loafer when he wants to be. Jest de same, he's gut it in him to hit a two-twenty clip. If Massa Frank puts him on de track next season, he's gwine to make deudder horses go some. Ah'd jest like to ride dat Dick mahself. Don' know but Ah's a little ober weight, but Ah'll train down—Ah'll train down."

"Do you suppose you can do it, Toots?"

"Say, missus, if Massa Frank goes in fo' racin', Ah'll take off der superfluity ob flesh if Ah have to starve mahself plumb to death. Bah golly! wouldn't Ah like to ride jest one mo' race befo' Ah die. 'Member de time Ah rode in der Derby ober 'cross de big pond? Ah rudder guess Ah made dem British jocks open dere eyes a blink or two. Yah! yah! yah!"

"Oh, I remember, Toots. It seems so long ago—so long ago."

They entered a strip of woods where the thick evergreen trees pressed close on either side of the road.

"Not much chance fo' two turnouts to pass here," observed Toots.

Inza shivered a bit.

"I don't like these woods," she murmured. "They're so dark and gloomy. Drive on as fast as you can, Toots."

At this moment there was a rustle by the roadside, and a man leaped out, seizing the horses by the bit and stopping them by a powerful surge of his arms. The man was roughly dressed and masked.

"Good Lo'd!" gasped Toots. "We's sholy met a highwayman! Let go dem hosses, dar! Ah'll put 'em ober you!"

The darky swung his whip to lash the horses, but his hand was caught, and the whip wrested from his grasp.

A second masked man had leaped out beside the sleigh. Quick as a flash this man reversed the whip and struck Toots a terrible blow with the heavy butt.

The darky slumped down in a heap, and a moment later the man with the whip yanked him out of the sleigh and pitched him headlong into the roadside bushes.

Inza screamed, but the man leaped in beside her and placed a smothering hand over her mouth.

"All right!" he cried. "Come on, partner! Get hold of those reins and jump in. I'll take care of the female."

The man at the horses' heads shifted about until he could secure the reins. Without loss of time, he sprang into the sleigh, and away they went, with Inza between them.

* * * * *

On a lonely country road stood an old tavern, known as The Elms. At one time the place had been famous

as the resort of fishermen who visited a near-by lake amid the hills. Gradually business at The Elms had declined, until its former owner had decided to dispose of the property and move.

With the coming of the new proprietor The Elms quickly obtained notoriety. It grew to be the resort of questionable characters, and many were the tales of carousals which took place there. Respectable people avoided the old tavern.

It was mid-afternoon on a winter's day when a handsome pair of horses, attached to a sleigh, turned in at The Elms. In the sleigh were three persons, two men and a woman.

"Begorra, Kate!" said Dan McCord, the proprietor of the tavern, pulling his wife toward the window, "here do be three visitors. It's not expectin' any one Oi were to-day. Oi wondther who they are."

"There's something the matther with the lady, Dan," said Mrs. McCord.

"It's a wee drap too much Oi think she's taken," chuckled Dan. "Where's that lazy boy? Oi'll have to go out and look after the horses mesilf."

He clapped on his hat and hurried out.

"Here, you!" called one of the men, as he stepped out of the sleigh. "We want rooms here. The lady is ill. Can you give her something to brace her up?"

"Me ould woman will look after that, sor," said Dan. "Hey, Moike? Where are yez, Moike?"

"Here, sir," answered a sleepy-looking boy, as he came plodding round the corner of the house.

"It's a wondther you wouldn't slape all th' day!" growled McCord. "Be after takin' care av these horses, ye lazybones."

The boy took charge of the horses, while the two men lifted the woman from the sleigh. Between them they practically carried her into the house.

"Dear! dear!" exclaimed Mrs. McCord, holding up her hands. "Whot's the throuble wid th' lady?"

"She's fainted, don't you know," answered one of the men. "We want a room for her right away. We'll take her to it."

Mrs. McCord led the way up a flight of stairs to a room. The two men found little trouble in carrying the lady up the stairs.

"Whot do same to be th' matther wid her?" asked Mrs. McCord, with a touch of suspicion in her manner.

One of the men drew her aside.

"Hush!" he said, in a whisper. "She's a trifle wrong in the head. We are doctors. We're taking her to a private sanitarium in Wellsburg. She imagines we're kidnaping her. She's liable to become violent at any time."

"Mercy on us!" gasped Mrs. McCord, backing toward the door. "Oi've had everything in me house save a lunatic, and now Oi have one av thim!"

"Fix her up a cup of hot coffee," directed one of the men. "I'll be down for it in a few minutes."

The moment Mrs. McCord left the room this man closed the door and turned to his companion.

"Deuce take the blooming luck, Roberts!" he exclaimed, in a low tone. "I hope the foolish woman isn't going to die on our hands!"

"If she does, you're to blame for it, Courtney!" flung back Roberts. "It was your scheme, and a thundering foolish piece of business I call it! If I hadn't been full of booze to the muzzle, you'd never got me into it."

"Are you going to wilt now?" demanded Courtney sneeringly.

"It's too late," said Roberts, with genuine regret. "For Heaven's sake, give me another drink! My nerves are completely upset."

Courtney produced the flask and tossed it to his companion, who lost no time in applying his lips to the nozzle.

"Now what'll we do?" he demanded. "What's your next move, man? Speak up."

"I intend to telephone Merriwell, but we can't telephone from here. They have no phone. We haven't harmed the woman, and we'll tell Merriwell where he'll find her if he coughs up a thousand. He'll have to swear not to put the officers after us."

"What if he does swear not to do that? His oath under such circumstances wouldn't be binding."

"But they say he never breaks his word. We'll make a play for the money, Roberts. Anyhow, we'll give him a good fright."

"And get pinched!" snarled Roberts. "I'll bet my life we both get pinched for this! It's the infernal drink that dragged me into it. Courtney, you're a scoundrel!"

"Enough of that talk!" rasped the Englishman. "We're safe here for the present. Merriwell can't find us before another day. You may as well stick it out, Roberts. I'll stay and watch this woman. You take one of the horses and ride to the nearest town, where you can phone her husband. Tell him to place the money in the hands of Bob Kirby, at the Bloomfield House. Call Kirby and instruct him to take the next train east. We'll meet him in Little Falls. Have you got that straight?"

"Yes, straight enough, I guess," said Roberts. "But you want to be careful, Courtney. We'll go to the jug if that woman is harmed."

"Don't worry about that. As soon as she recovers I'm going to lock her in this room. No matter how much racket she makes, I'll stick to the story that she's insane."

"Well, I'm off," said Roberts, "and I'm taking this flask. You can get plenty of drink here. So long!"

CHAPTER XV.

HOW BUBBS GOT EVEN.

"Good-by!" muttered Roberts, as he hastily descended the stairs; "good-by, Courtney! Here's where we split. I'm going to hike out of this part of the country as fast as horse-flesh and steam will carry me. You're in for about a year behind bars. I've come to my senses at last."

Hastening from the house, he made his way to the stable, where he ordered the boy to put a saddle on one of the horses.

"I'm going to telephone to the sanitarium," he said. "We may be delayed here two or three hours until the woman entirely recovers."

So eager was he to get away that he performed the most of the work in saddling and bridling the horse. The animal was ready at last, and Roberts prepared to lead him from the old stable. The boy flung open the door and uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"Gee whiz!" he cried. "Who are all these fellers? Where did they come from?"

"Roberts' heart gave a throb of dismay, for, entering the dooryard, he beheld nearly a dozen boys on snow-shoes, led by Frank Merriwell.

"Lord help me!" gasped Roberts. "It's Merriwell and his snow-shoe class! How in the name of all bad luck do they happen to be here?"

He thrust his foot into the stirrup, leaped to the saddle, bent low, and struck the horse a terrible blow.

With a leap, the animal shot out of the stable.

"Clear the road!" yelled Roberts. "I'll run down any fool who tries to stop me!"

In spite of this threat, one of the boys tried to seize the animal's head. He was knocked down, and Roberts reached the road.

Charles Courtney heard voices outside, and leaped to the window. He saw his confederate mounted on the horse, which went galloping madly down the road. He also saw Frank Merriwell and his youthful companions. Not only that, but Merriwell looked up and saw Courtney at the window.

That strange thing which men call fate had guided Frank's footsteps since leaving the academy with the youthful snow-shoers. Something had seemed to urge Frank on. Instead of making a short cross-country trip, he had covered miles, with the intention of testing the endurance of the boys who followed him. Two or three had grown weary, and these turned back at Frank's instruction.

It was a surprising thing that among the most determined and skilful snow-shoers of the class Bob Bubbs was prominent. This betrayed the fact that his bungling efforts at snow-shoeing on the first day had been made with a purpose.

As the class followed Frank up a hill and reached the crest, Merry discovered a familiar-looking turnout passing along a road half-a-mile away.

"What's my rig doing here?" he muttered. "There are three persons in the sleigh. They're going toward the old tavern called The Elms. The one in the middle looks like a woman. It can't be—it can't be—"

He did not utter the name that rose to his lips, but turned to the boys, urging them to follow him with all possible speed, and led the way directly toward The Elms.

Looking from the window, Courtney knew he had been seen by Merriwell.

"Trapped, by Heaven!" he snarled. "And Roberts has escaped! Well, they'll have a good time taking me!"

He leaped to the door and bolted it, hearing the sound of footsteps on the stairs. Frank Merriwell was coming up those stairs, four steps at a time. Reaching the door of the room, he hurled himself against it. The panel was splintered, but the door withstood the shock.

At this moment Inza recovered and uttered a feeble call.

Courtney hesitated a moment and then again leaped to the window, kicking out sash and glass with his foot. As the door burst open, admitting Frank to the room, Courtney leaped from the window. He struck awkwardly and pitched forward at full length in the snow.

Like a panther, a boyish figure sprang upon the

man's shoulders. Bob Bubbs was there. He drove his knee into Courtney's back, at the same time grasping the Englishman's wrist with one hand and his elbow with the other. In this manner he twisted Courtney's arm and held him helpless on his stomach.

"That's a mighty fine trick you taught me, professor!" chuckled the little fellow. "How do you like it?"

From the broken window Merriwell called:

"Hold him, Bob! The boys are coming to help you! Don't let him escape!"

"Oh, I don't need any help," declared Bubbs. "He's just as gentle and quiet as a little lamb."

Ten minutes later Charles Courtney, with his arms tied behind his back, stood facing Frank Merriwell.

"Courtney," said Frank, "I'm sorry for you. You're a fool, but you're a dangerous fool. It isn't good for the community that such a man should be running at large. I think this little piece of business will place you where you'll have lots of time to repent, for I give you my assurance that I shall do my best to land you in prison. Roberts, poor fool, may go for all I care, since you tempted him with drink; but your race is run."

Then Merry turned and placed his hand on Bob Bubbs' shoulder.

"My boy," he observed, with the slightest possible smile on his face, "you're an apt pupil. You learn your lessons well, and I think you'll graduate from my school with high honors."

THE END.

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Beware of cheap imitations of the Tip Top Weekly. Frank and Dick Merriwell and their friends appear only in the pages of Tip Top. BURT L. STANDISH writes exclusively for Tip Top and has been the author of the ONLY and ORIGINAL Merriwell stories for over nine years.

BOYS!

BOYS!

BOYS!

TIP TOP FREE POST CARDS!

AT the present time over one hundred thousand copies of "TIP TOP" are sold throughout the United States every week! There are many good reasons why boys like "TIP TOP" better than any other five cent weekly publication. Why do **YOU** like it?

We have prepared a set of six handsome post cards, which we will send to every boy who will write and give us his opinion of "TIP TOP."

These cards are illustrations of Frank Merriwell, Brad Buckhart, Obediah Tubbs, Joe Crowfoot, Dick Merriwell, and Cap'n Wiley.

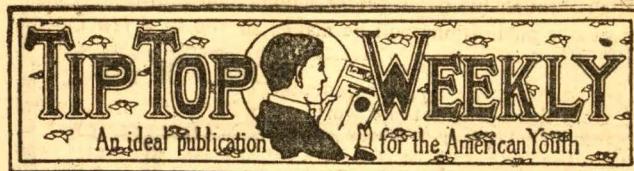
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STREET & SMITH

PUBLISHERS

NEW YORK



NEW YORK, February 3, 1906.

TERMS TO TIP TOP WEEKLY MAIL SUBSCRIBERS.

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STREET & SMITH'S TIP TOP WEEKLY,
79-89 Seventh Avenue, New York City.

TIP TOP ROLL OF HONOR.

Following the suggestion of Mr. Burt L. Standish, that appeared in his letter to Tip Top readers in No. 480, the following loyal Tip Toppers have won for themselves a place on our Honor Roll for their efforts to increase the circulation of the King of Weeklies. Get in line boys and girls and strive to have your name at the head of the list

William Alkire, 295 Laurel St., Bridgeton, N. J.
Z. T. Layfield, Jr., Montgomery, Ala.
J. G. Byrum, Chattanooga, Tenn.
Wm. Schwartz, New York City.
Edw. W. Pritner, Cirelsville, Pa.
H. D. Morgan, Indianapolis, Ind.
Wm. A. Cottrell, Honolulu, H. I.
J. (Pop) H., Birmingham, Ala.
Roy R. Ball, 902 Olive Street, Texarkana.
Fred F. Blake, 1512 E. 10 St., Kansas City, Mo.

The names of other enthusiastic Tip Toppers will be added from time to time. Send in the result of your efforts to push the circulation of your favorite weekly and win a place on the Roll of Honor.

APPLAUSE.

Owing to the number of letters received, the editors of Tip Top cannot undertake to secure their publication under six weeks. Those who contribute to this department must not expect to see them before that time.

Allow me to again add a "mite" to the Applause column of the world's best publication, viz.: TIP TOP WEEKLY. First I must congratulate Street & Smith for publishing such a weekly as the renowned TIP TOP. To Mr. Burt L. Standish words of praise are flowing from every quarter of the globe, and he is certainly entitled to all of it. I am an old reader, and am proud to own to my friends that I read TIP TOP. Every successful firm always has cheap imitators, and Street & Smith is no exception to the rule. That TIP TOP is successful is not doubted, if for no other reason than that it has so many cheap imitations which are intended to catch the unwary, although they never "get" the same person twice. For nothing less than curiosity I read one of them, and how they are kept on the market is a mystery that the famous Nick Carter would think over for quite awhile. The baseball story in it was about one—not Frank Merriwell, of TIP TOP fame—who played all nine

positions on a baseball team. Take, for instance, a theatrical performance. If it has no plot it is not very interesting. And in a book, if there is nothing but "plain sailing," is there anything to hold the attention of a reader? Well, this chap played all nine positions, because the other members of the team were a little "shaky." The first inning he pitched, the next he played short, and so on till he had played every position. That's all the "plot" I saw in the book, and if there was more, then I failed to see it. I am a Dorisite first, last, and all the time. Of the "fellers," I like Dick first, and Brad comes a close second, and I don't like Smart a bit (?). Even the "villains" come in for a little respect from me, for do they not help to make TIP TOP what it is to-day? Oh, my! but why didn't Dick say the word to Doris in last week's TIP TOP? It is to be hoped that our hero and his friends come to Norfolk during 1907, when the Jamestown Tercentennial Exposition is being held. This exposition will celebrate the three hundredth anniversary of the birth of our great and glorious nation. North, South, East, and West are now as inseparable as am I from TIP TOP. To our English cousins across the "blue" I extend a hearty invitation to come across and sojourn in Norfolk during 1907. I do not wish to take all the room in the Applause, so I will retire in favor of TIP TOP forever. Respectfully yours, HENRY CLAY.

161 Falkland Street, Norfolk, Va.

The namesake of the Virginian orator shows that he has caught a spark of the great statesman's fire. He has discovered, with a host of other readers of TIP TOP, that an imitation of anything that has real merit falls way below the original. TIP TOP has always had imitators, but they put forth such feeble productions that boys who wanted good live stories refused to read them, and stuck to their old standby, TIP TOP, the king of weeklies.

As I have been a constant reader of TIP TOP for a period of four years, I thought I would write once more, telling you how much I like it, as it is a pleasure to read TIP TOP. I would like to correspond with my other brother readers, to see which character they like best and other things. I am also collecting postal cards, and would be willing at any time to exchange postal cards with any of my brother readers.

I like Dick and Frank best of all; then Brad, Cap'n Wiley, and Stretcher.

As this is my third or fourth time, telling you how much I am interested in the famous TIP TOP WEEKLY, I think I will stop. I will close, with three cheers to the famous Burt L. Standish and Street & Smith. Very respectfully,

C. G. FREIFFER.

123 West Government Street, Pensacola, Fla.

The Northern readers of TIP TOP will have a chance to get pictures of sunny Florida, and just at a season when they wish they were where it is so warm and comfortable.

I have been a reader of TIP TOP for several years, and enjoy it more than any other book of its kind published, and can hardly wait for each issue to come out. I always read the Applause, and can't remember of ever seeing a letter from this section, so I write this to let you know that the northern and western parts of the country are not the only ones that admire TIP TOP, for I can vouch for Virginia. Dick is my favorite, and my opinion is that he will marry June Arlington.

Hoping this will not find its way to the waste-basket, as it is the first I have seen from this place, will close, wishing Dick success in his career at school now that he is back.

I save souvenir postal cards. I will exchange with those who express a wish to do so by mentioning it in the Applause columns.

"A TIP TOP ADMIRER."

Lexington, Va.

Virginia is a State that has shown up strong in the Applause from time to time. We are glad to welcome your town to your State's representation.

This is the first letter I have written to this column. I am not a subscriber of your king of weeklies, but I manage to get the paper every week as near as possible. I am very well pleased with TIP TOP, and believe it is justly styled the "king of weeklies." Some of my boy friends and myself wish to obtain back numbers of the paper, and we would be pleased if

you could send us a catalogue of back numbers, prices of quartiles, etc. With three cheers for Burt L. Standish, Street & Smith, and with hopes that this will escape the "W. B.," I remain,

WALTER J. HERBES.

Humphreys, Neb.

The quarterlies are out of print. We will mail you a catalogue in a few days.

I have been trying to frame up a "spiel" with which to express my appreciation of your weekly, but I find it beyond me. I only have to say this, that I am a busy man, and don't have time to read much, but I always find time to read TIP TOP. What there is in it to so fascinate a person I can't say, unless it is the naturalness of the characters. Rob Riordan is certainly the limit. He certainly got his from Dick. Well, I will stop chewing the rag. Please accept the above, from

Orlando, Fla.

"A FLORIDA CRACKER."

Nothing the matter with your "spie"; don't worry.

I thought I would write you these few lines, hoping to have you publish my praise for the "king of weeklies," TIP TOP. I think it is just the greatest book ever, and I thank my lucky stars for the day I first saw TIP TOP. It is entirely different from other books. Please send me a catalogue of TIP TOP from No. 1 to date, as I want to buy a lot of back numbers. I would like to correspond with little "Brown Eyes." As I have taken up a great deal of space, I will close, with a tiger for Street & Smith and a merry "hurrah!" for Burt L. Standish. I will fight to the death for dear TIP TOP. Yours truly,

1509 Dolore Street, San Francisco, Cal. ERLE COMYNS.

We have mailed you a catalogue, and hope that you find what pleases you. Remember that all TIP TOP stories issued before No. 304 are out of print, except in our Medal Library.

As I never have written to the Applause, I think it's time I was expressing my opinion of your "king of weeklies." I have been reading your celebrated TIP TOP for over three years, and I am ready to read it another thirty years, as long as Frank or Dick Merriwell are the main characters in it. Now about F. and D.'s friends. First of all, I like Jack Diamond, next Brad Buckhart, Bart Hodge, Bob Singleton, Bruce Browning, Dave Flint, and last, but not least, Harry Rattleton. Of the girls, I like Elsie Bellwood and Doris Templeton. I would like to correspond with any of the readers of TIP TOP. Hoping this weary letter will not find the trash basket, I remain,

Yours truly, THOMAS D. BERRY, JR.

420 Bedford Avenue, Bedford City, Va.

May you always read TIP TOP and enjoy it as much thirty years from now as you do to-day.

I have been reading the TIP TOP for over two years now, but I have read a great number of the back numbers, though I haven't been able to get any numbers as far back before Frank entered Yale. I have met a great deal of opposition from friends, but I have told them to read it themselves, and the result was all in favor of the TIP TOP.

I am reading all the Merriwell stories which are being published in the Medal Library, so I think I will be able to make up for what I have lost.

I like Frank and Dick, with Bart and Brad close on behind. I see a lot of readers are advising Burt L. Standish about how to marry Dick. Well, in one of the late numbers of the Merriwell stories in the Medal Library, I quote Bart Hodge: "If Frank marries for at least five years yet, he is no friend of mine." Frank was then about nineteen or twenty years old, and Dick can't be more than seventeen, so he has a long while to wait yet. So let all who talk of his marrying let up on it, for Burt L. Standish knows what he is doing.

I would like to correspond with any of the readers of TIP TOP, be they boy or girl, and I will exchange post-cards with any one. Well, I had better close this long letter, or it will go to the waste-basket; so, with three cheers for Burt L. Standish, Street & Smith, and all the loyal readers of TIP TOP, I will close. Will you please send me a catalogue of the TIP TOP? Thanking you for it in advance,

W.M. ASHBRIDGE.

703 North Fifteenth Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

You have hit upon the right solution of the marrying ques-

tion. Dick is too young, and give Mr. Standish a chance to put Dick through his paces before finding him a bride. A catalogue of our publications will be mailed to you in a few days.

In reading over the Applause column, I have failed to see any name from this corner of the world. So I will try and express my opinion of TIP TOP WEEKLY and its numerous characters.

I have been a reader of TIP TOP for the last five years, and have never missed a number. The reason I enjoy the paper is because I am a member of the Mt. Vernon Baseball Team and also the High School Football Team. This is a college town of about twenty-two hundred inhabitants.

I like June the best of all the girls. Chet Arlington is a "snake."

Porfias del Norte must be "Satan." I hope he surely is dead this time.

Frank and Bart, Dick and Brad are the best, and the rest are all O. K. Would say more, but it would make too long a letter for publication.

Long life to TIP TOP. Although this is a long letter, I hope you will publish it as soon as possible, as I want the other "kids" to know that I am not ashamed to read TIP TOP. From a true TIP TOP admirer,

LLOYD GOODHUE.

Mt. Vernon, Ia.

You need not be ashamed of reading TIP TOP, the weekly which has the largest circulation of all similar publications. It is found in all homes where clean, wholesome, and stimulating literature is read. Men and women and girls read TIP TOP as well as the boys. And besides, professional people—doctors, lawyers, architects, etc.—read it with as much zest as young men. So, you see, you are in good company when you champion the "ideal publication for the American youth." You will find that after you leave school and college you have not outgrown TIP TOP. You will continue to read it for many years to come, and enjoy it as much as you did when you read it the first time.

As I have been a reader of the king of weeklies for the past seven years, I thought I would send in a few words of praise for this noble book. This book should be read by all youths of this great nation. Every reader of this great book should try and get others to read it, thereby doing a great amount of good, as it would surely help them. Mr. Burt L. Standish is a master of the pen. His description of football is simply great. As I am a football player and manager of the Constantine Football Team, I can see that he understands the game. I like all the characters. Of course Dick and Frank stand way ahead of the others. The characters of this book could not be better chosen. I am a collector of old coins and souvenir postal cards, and will exchange with any of the readers of the TIP TOP. I have some fine views of old Constantine, the prettiest town in southern Michigan. I would like to correspond with a Kansas Lassie. Will now bring this long letter to a close, hoping to see this in print. I remain, ever a TIP TOP admirer,

Box 594, Constantine, Mich.

DE LOSS DAVIS.

Our readers never have to complain that the author does not know what he is writing about. This often occurs in regard to stories of football, baseball, and other sports which appear in weeklies that feebly try to imitate TIP TOP.

As I have never seen a letter from the capital of New Brunswick, I thought I would write one. I have just finished reading TIP TOP No. 497. The only weeklies I read are the TIP TOP and *Brave and Bold*. I think TIP TOP beats them all. Frank is my favorite. Dick is all right, but I don't think he can ever come up to Frank. Doris is the girl for Dick. As this is a short letter, I hope it will appear in the Applause column as soon as possible. I will exchange souvenir post-cards with any of the readers of TIP TOP. As it is getting along toward the last of the year, I will close, wishing you all a merry Christmas,

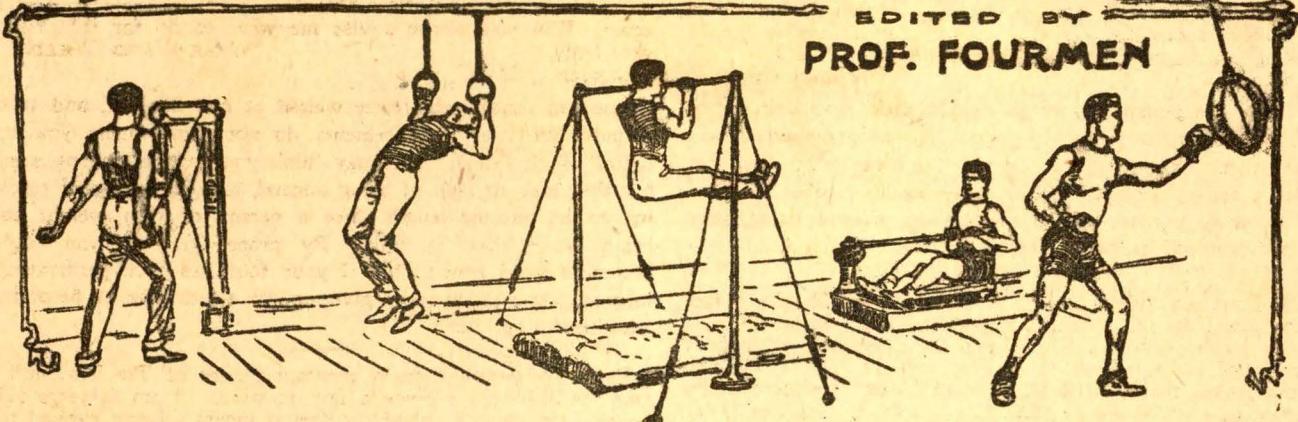
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada.

KARL CLARKE.

By making TIP TOP and *Brave and Bold* your weekly reading you have made a good selection. It means that you will always have at hand bright, clean stories which will never fail to interest you.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

EDITED BY
PROF. FOURMEN



PROF. FOURMEN: As I have been reading the TIP TOP for a number of years, I take the liberty to ply a few questions. I am very well developed all over, but the muscles of my arm are weak. I think that I received it in throwing too hard and for too long a time, and I want to know how I can restore it to its original condition. The TIP TOP has done more for me than all the rest of the books put together. I have stopped smoking. Thanking you in advance for the answer, I remain,

LLANO, Tex.

"A LLANO TIP TOPPER."

You have probably strained the arm at some point. What it needs is complete rest. Every time you pitch it is strained anew. When you go to bed, place a cold, wet towel around the affected part, and put a dry towel around that. Let both towels remain on all night.

PROF. FOURMEN: I have been a reader of TIP TOP a long while, and say that there is no other publication that can claim merit as it can. Will you please tell me what you think of my measurements? Age, 19 years 6 months; height, 5 feet 4 inches; weight, 130 pounds, stripped; neck, 14 inches; shoulders, 42 inches; chest, 35 inches; waist, 29 inches; hips, 34 inches; thighs, 18½ inches; calves, 13 inches; biceps, 10½ inches; forearm, 10 inches; wrist, 7 inches. Thanking you in advance, I remain, a stanch Tip Topper,

M. E. M.

Knoxville, Ia.

You are a pretty solid chunk of humanity, and no doubt could hold your own in a rough and tumble.

PROF. FOURMEN: I have been a constant reader of the TIP TOP for several years. I also take great interest in all athletic games. I take the liberty of asking you a few questions. I am 15 years old; height, 6 feet; weight, 152 pounds; chest, normal, 34 inches; expanded, 36 inches; neck, 14 inches; waist, 32 inches; wrist, 7 inches; forearm, 10½ inches; muscles of arm, contracted, 12 inches; shoulders, from tip to tip, 17 inches; thigh, 20 inches; calf, 13 inches. Please tell me which are my weak points and which are my strong, and how to develop and remedy any defects. Respectfully yours,

LESLIE C. WADDELL.

Pittsburg, Pa.

One hundred and fifty pounds is a good weight, but not for a "six-footer." You need a general rounding out, but proper training in gymnastics will develop you.

PROF. FOURMEN: Having read a good many TIP TOP WEEKLIES, I take pleasure in asking a few questions. I am 12 years 8 months old; weight, 92 pounds; chest, normal, 27 inches; expanded, 31 inches; thighs, 16 inches; hips, 28 inches; waist, 27 inches; neck, 12½ inches; biceps, 8 inches; wrist, 5 inches; calves, 12 inches; ankle, 9½ inches. 1. What are my weak points? 2. How can I become a runner and a football player? 3. Does riding a bicycle strengthen the hips and legs more than running? I remain, yours,

WALTER DAVIS.

Richmond, Ind.

1. Though I have not your height, your other measurements seem to be fair for one of your weight and age.

2. By practising every opportunity you get you can develop into a good runner, but you are too light to play football at present.

3. Bicycle riding and running both have their advocates. You will not go amiss, whichever exercise you decide upon. It would be better, however, to take both, alternating one with the other.

PROF. FOURMEN: I have read TIP TOP for about three years, and think it's fine. Would you kindly look at my measurements and tell me what you think of them? Age, 15 years; height, 5 feet; weight, 100 pounds; neck, 12 inches; shoulders, across, 15½ inches; chest, normal, 27 inches; expanded, 30 inches; waist, 26 inches; thigh, 17 inches; calf, 12 inches; ankle, 8 inches; biceps, 10½ inches; forearm, 11 inches; wrist, 6 inches. What are my weak and strong points? I can put a hundredweight of sugar on my shoulder. I can do most any trick. I stand on my hands. Is that good? What exercises should I take? Could I become an athlete? I am a good runner, and can jump good. I will write soon again. Wishing Burt L. Street & Smith, and yourself a long life, I remain, A TRUE BLUENOSE.

Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The thing for you to do is to go into a good gymnasium and train for general, all-around development. Later on, you will find that there will be some one thing that you are able to do best. It might be running, jumping, putting the shot, etc. When you do find out what your abilities are you will naturally try to develop them to the fullest extent. But take your gymnasium course first; this is the only way that anybody can find out what he is able to do the best.

PROF. FOURMEN: As I am a constant reader of TIP TOP, kindly tell me what exercise I could take to grow tall. I am 18 years 9 months old and 5 feet 5½ inches tall. Is dumb-bell exercise good? Would staying out late nights stop growth, and what time should a boy of my age go to bed? Waiting for answer,

BOSTON, MASS.

You have two or three years in which to grow taller, so do not despair. You might grow several inches in that short space of time. Bad habits, like smoking, drinking, and keeping late hours, will retard your growth about as quickly as anything. A growing boy needs plenty of sleep. Get eight hours—nine will not hurt you—and remember that one hour *before* midnight is better than two after that hour. In other words, go to bed about nine or ten o'clock.

PROF. FOURMEN: Being a reader of TIP TOP, I take the liberty to ask you a few questions. My measurements are as follows: Age, 15 years 9 months; height, 5 feet 10 inches; weight, 147 pounds; neck, 14½ inches; biceps, 12½ inches; forearm, 12 inches; wrist, 7 inches; waist, 29 inches; across shoulders, 18 inches; thigh, 20½ inches; calves, 14½ inches; ankles, 9 inches. I am a pitcher on our high school baseball team. I pitch about one game a week, and my arm never gets sore and never gives out during a game. The average number of hits gotten off me in

five games was five and three-fifths, or thirteen hits in five games. But I pitched more than that this year. 1. How are my measurements? 2. What are my weak points? 3. Do you think I would ever make a successful pitcher? 4. How can I develop speed? Thanking you in advance, I remain, yours truly,

Fairbank, Ia.

WILBER FINCH.

A few more pounds in weight would make you better proportioned. Your biceps are too small, but proper exercise will develop them. You ought to be able to make a good pitcher if you practise diligently. You will develop speed in time. Play as many practise games as possible without tiring your arm, and you will gradually acquire it.

PROF. FOURMEN: How are my measurements? Height, 5 feet 8 inches; weight, 141 pounds, dressed; neck, 14 inches; shoulders, 17 inches; around, 42 inches; chest, normal, 37 inches; expanded, 38 inches; waist, 27 inches; arm, 12 inches; forearm, 11 inches; hips, 35 inches; thigh, 20 inches; calf, 14 inches; ankle, 9 inches; age, 17 years. I take deep-breathing exercises every night and morning for about fifteen minutes each time. 1. How is this? 2. Can I become a good all-around track and field athlete? Here are some of my records: Hundred yards, 10 1-5 seconds; running high jump, 4 feet 10 inches; running broad jump, 13 feet; standing broad jump, 8 feet 7 inches. How are these records? Hoping this shall reach you in the near future, I remain, yours truly,

So AND So.

By taking a course in an up-to-date gymnasium for the next year or so, faithful work should begin to tell. If you are properly trained, there is no reason why you should not make a good athlete. Your records are very good.

PROF. FOURMEN: As I have been reading TIP TOP for about two years, and never sent my measurements in, I think that there had ought to be a little room there for mine. My measurements are: Age, 15 years; weight, 131 pounds; height, 5 feet 5 inches; calves, 15 inches; thigh, left, 19 inches; right, 19 inches; wrist, left, 6½ inches; right, 6½ inches; bicep, left, 12 inches; right, 12 inches; forearm, left, 10 inches; right, 9½ inches; waist, 30 inches; neck, 15 inches; chest, relaxed, 29 inches; expanded, 34 inches; ankles, 11 inches; width from shoulder to shoulder, 19 inches; reach, 68 inches; knee, 15 inches; hips, 36 inches. About twenty of us boys in town have started up an athletic club. What are my weak points? Please tell me how to strengthen them. I am going to school. Thanking you in advance, I remain,

CLAUD STINE.

Bremen, Ind.

Your weight is good, but your chest and biceps should be larger. Dumb-bells, Indian clubs, pulley weights, or the punching-bag will give you the necessary development. Exercise in the morning on getting out of bed, and after school hours, as well as at night.

PROF. FOURMEN: Being a constant reader of the TIP TOP WEEKLY, I take the liberty of asking a few questions. My age is 18 years; height, 5 feet 2 inches. What should the correct weight be, and measurements of my thigh, biceps, calf, ankle, chest, waist, wrist, neck, and hips? Hoping you will answer this as soon as possible, I remain, yours,

P. AND D.

New York City.

The following are correct measurements of a person five feet two inches: Weight, about 112 or 115 pounds; neck, 12 inches; waist, 30 inches; chest, 34 or 35 inches; biceps, 12 inches; length of forearm, 9½ inches; thighs, 17 inches; calves, 12 inches.

PROF. FOURMEN: Will you kindly answer the following questions in TIP TOP? I am 18 years of age; height, 5 feet 5½ inches; weight, 140 pounds; neck, 14 inches; chest, normal, 33 inches; expanded, 35½ inches; waist, 28 inches; biceps, normal, 9½ inches; flexed, 10¾ inches; forearm, 9½ inches; thigh, 20½ inches; calf, 13¾ inches; across shoulders, 17½ inches; arm reach, 5 feet 11 inches. I have very long arms. 1. How are my measurements? 2. What are my weak points, and how can I develop them? 3. What are my strong points, if I have any? 4. Do you think I am best suited to be a sprinter or long-

distance runner? 5. In a half-mile race last spring, I injured my foot. It felt as if it was broken in half right through the instep, and now if I run a hundred yards I begin to feel it again. Will you please advise me what to do for it? Yours very truly,

"WASH-WATER WILLIE."

Lawrence, Mass.

You are considerably over weight at one hundred and forty pounds, but your measurements do not show where you are hiding all that beef. You may think you have very long arms, but they lack an inch of being normal, to say nothing of reaching to an unusual length. For a person of your weight and height your chest is small. By proper training you might become a good runner, but if your foot has been permanently injured you will have to give up all aspirations of becoming a successful sprinter.

PROF. FOURMEN: I am a constant reader of TIP TOP, and I take the liberty to ask you a few questions. I am 14 years old; weight, 170 pounds; height, 5 feet 9 inches. I can expand my chest two inches. Is that good? How does my height, weight, and age compare? I bought a set of boxing-gloves. Could you tell me how much to use them every day? I am a member of the Y. M. C. A., and attend Thursdays and Saturdays. They have a large gym. there; they also have a large plunge and about ten shower-baths. Which is better—a hot or cold shower? How long should I stay under a hot shower? Hoping I have not taken up too much room, I am, respectfully,

"A READER."

Cleveland, Ohio.

A weight of one hundred and seventy pounds is too much for one of your height. Box until you are tired—it will not do you any harm. Do not use a hot shower; let the water be only tepid.

PROF. FOURMEN: I have been a reader of TIP TOP since 1900. I take the liberty to ask you a few questions. I am 14 years 5 months old; height, 5 feet 8 inches; chest, normal, 34½ inches; expanded, 38¾ inches; thighs, 18 inches; calves, 17½ inches; forearm, 9½ inches; waist, 28 inches; shoulder to shoulder, 19 inches; weight, 133 pounds. How are my measurements? My weight? Am I not tall for my age? Would like to become all-round athlete. Do I stand a good chance? Hoping to see this in print, I remain,

A FAITHFUL READER.

Perth Amboy, N. J.

You lack considerable weight for one of your height, and the chest development is much larger than I would look for in one whose other measurements and weight do not correspond to a thirty-eight-inch expansion. Yes, you are tall for your age. If you take a thorough course in a gymnasium you may in time become quite an athlete.

PROF. FOURMEN: I am a steady reader of the TIP TOP WEEKLY, and enjoy it very much. I am also steady in looking up your answers, so I thought I would ask you to answer a few questions for me, which I hope you will do for me as soon as you possibly can. I am 15 years 8 months old; 4 feet 8 inches high; weight, 76 pounds; neck, 12 inches; chest, normal, 27½ inches; expanded, 29 inches; thighs, 12 inches; ankles, 8 inches; forearms, 9¾ inches; wrists, 5½ inches; biceps, 9 inches. Yours truly,

JOHN GEORGE LAHNER.

2321 South Rosewood Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

Your measurements show that you are well put together, and have a good frame on which to build a sound muscular development.

"GOLDEN HOURS."

Boys, have you any old numbers of Golden Hours? If so, see what numbers are among them and write me, stating price. I will pay liberally to complete my files. Address WILLIAMS, Station "O," Box 24, New York City.

TIP TOP WEEKLY

CAUTION!

All readers of the Renowned Tip Top stories should beware of base imitations, placed upon the market under catch names very similar to Frank Merriwell, and intended to deceive.

472—Frank Merriwell's Handicap; or, Hastings, The Hurdler from Humboldt.

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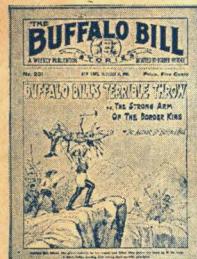
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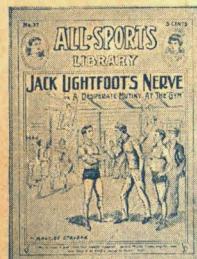
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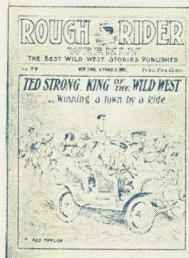
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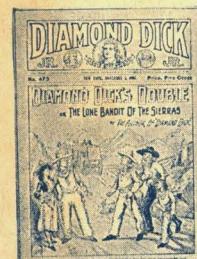
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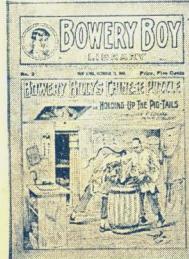
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